Hafa Adai!

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Saipan Tribune

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Fire torches 15 acres of grassland

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

» Causes evacuation of some families

A large bush fire burned about 10 to 15 acres of vegetation on a mountain in Kannat Tabla, forcing at least five families to evacuate their homes on Sunday night.

No one was reported injured or received any medical calls related to the wildfire, according to Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services spokesperson Jocelyn Alvarez yesterday.

"The cause of the fire is still under investigation," Alvarez said.

Motorists on Beach Road and Chalan Pale Arnold could clearly view the raging fire on the mountain. Starting at 8pm, debris from the fire started falling on many villages.

The Department of Public Safety and the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services received a call about the wildfire on Sunday at 6:22pm. It

See FIRE on Page 4

▲ This photo is taken from the south side of the mountain at 8:51pm as the forest fire was trailing toward San Vicente Village. ANDREW KIM VILLANUEVA

TO DISMISS CRIMINAL CASE

Tinian Dynasty agrees to forfeit $3M

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The owner of Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino has agreed in principle to settle its criminal case in exchange for the forfeiture of $3.02 million plus other terms and conditions.

Assistant U.S. attorney Ross Naughton, as counsel for the U.S. government, and attorney Bruce Berline, as counsel for Hong Kong Entertainment (Overseas) Investment Ltd., informed the U.S. District Court for the NMI on Friday that although they have agreed in principle to the settlement, they are awaiting the U.S. Department of Justice's final approval of the civil forfeiture amount.

Naughton and Berline also asked the court to reset the Feb. 9, 2015, jury trial based upon the fact that they have agreed to dismiss the case without prejudice in consideration for the $3-million civil forfeiture, along with other terms and conditions.

Naughton and Berline said Hong Kong Entertainment and

See TINIAN on Page 4

Judge reinstates 4 charges vs Fitial

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman has granted Office of the Public Auditor legal counsel George Hasselback's motion to reconsider his dismissal of the criminal charges against former governor Benigno R. Fitial.

In granting the motion, Wiseman basically reinstated four of the 13 criminal charges against Fitial.

The four counts in the information that will proceed refer to alleged criminal activity associated with the police escort provided former attorney general Edward T. Buckingham in August 2012 that shielded him from being served with penal summons.

Hasselback asserted, among other

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GOT A NEWS TIP?
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Local

Do Re Mi student tops Guam music competition

By DENNIS B. CHAN
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REPORTER

A student from Do Re Mi Music School topped the elementary division of Guam Symphony Society's "Young Artist Competition 2015" late last month.

Young musicians from both the CNMI and Guam went head-to-head in the Jan. 28 and 29 competition at the University of Guam Theatre.

Kevin Liang, an 11-year-old from Saipan Community School, emerged on top with his rendition of "Violin Concerto in E minor, Op. 64-Third Movement," by Felix Mendelssohn.

Ao Zhang, Do Re Mi's founder and one of Liang's teachers, called the song a "difficult piece, a professional piece."

"He did great," Zhang said of Liang in an interview yesterday.

Liang began his study of the song in August, practicing every day ahead of the competition.

"Violin is a difficult instrument," Zhang said. "But Kevin's talented. He practices more than three hours a day. Saturday and Sunday, eight hours."

Zhang said the song requires "high technique" and all kinds of different skills on the violin, among them great finger dexterity and a good ear for intervals and tempo.

Other musicians played the piano, auto saxophone, violin, or sang, among other things.

DENNIS B. CHAN

From left to right are Do Re Mi music school founder Ao Zhang, Kevin Liang, and teacher Yi Wang.

Pianist Cameron Fruit accompanied Liang during his performance as well as on the trip. Zhang and Liang's mother could not accompany him over issues with their papers.

Zhang said he wishes he could have made the trip. He said Liang stood on the part of the stage that was farther away from the audience than he should have, but he still happened to win.

Did Liang get nervous on the stage? "I never get nervous," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

Zhang said Liang has all the different skills and supporting factors that make him good. Liang also plays the ukulele, flute and piano.

"First you need talent," he said. "He never feels scared," Zhang said of Liang. That's a talent, he said.

You also need an "ear" or "music sense," he said. This can't be taught, Zhang said. You also need good teachers, and supporting parents, he said.

"Not everybody has all these," Zhang said.

Liang will perform at the Young Artist Award Winners concert on Feb. 15 this month. He also plans to play at Guam's Tumon Bay Music Festival in March.

Liang treated *Saipan Tribune* to a live performance of his winning rendition.

The song was played fast, with dozens of notes cascading across the air of the room, peaking, dancing, and riddling the ear for a soothing, lively experience.

It may make you feel young again. "The violin has a soul," Zhang said. "It moves your heart. It's very difficult."

DENNIS B. CHAN

Students of Mathcourt's Team CNMI poses with mentors and competition administrators after the high school state meet last Saturday.

Team CNMI named for Mathleague nat'l competition

By DENNIS B. CHAN
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REPORTER

Students for Mathcourt's Team CNMI were announced after last Saturday's competition at Saipan Southern High School.

These students will represent the CNMI in the Mathleague.org national high school competition in Kansas City later this year.

Won Woo Cho, a twelfth grader from Marianas Baptist School, took home gold.

Hyun Bin Hwang, a senior at Saipan Southern High School, placed second.

Won Jun Kim, a tenth grader from MBA, placed third.

Jun Seo Park, a senior at SSHS, and Joel Jang, a junior at SSHS, placed fourth and fifth, respectively.

Myung Jae Cho, a tenth grade student from Saipan International School, placed sixth.

Choi, Hwang, and Park also competed in last year's national competition.

Alternatives for Team CNMI were also named. They are Agape Christian School's Frederic Dean Michael Guintu and Lucy Gui, Marianas Baptist Academy's Alina Yoon and Su Hwan Bae, and Saipan International School's Dong Gu Hyun and Jun Young Chung.

MBA also won the title of "Gold Team" for the team round of the competition.

PIC's 7th Annual Duck Race this Saturday

By JAYSON CAMACHO
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REPORTER

Going on its 7th year, the Pacific Islands Club's annual duck race and human duck race will commence this Saturday evening at the PIC.

In an interview yesterday evening, PIC director of sports, entertainment and activities Glenn Policare said the human duck race still has two slots left.

"There are 22 confirmed slots for the human duck race and we only have two left," Policare said.

Confirmed slots include T-Galleria/DFS, which took seven slots; Saipan Swim Club, which took two; Saipan International School and PIC-SEA department, two. The American Red Cross-NMI Chapter, Trench Tech, Calvo's Insurance, Saipan Ice and Water Co., KKMP, and Island Apparel each took one slot.

The entry fee for companies wanting to fill the remaining two slots is $50 and winners of the human duck race will receive four PIC annual membership pass.

PIC will provide swim caps, duck beaks, life jackets, swim fins and an inflatable duck.

Policare said there are still available plastic ducks if community members still want to purchase one. The ducks will also be sold on the night of the duck race.

Prizes for the rubber duck race is $2,500 for first place, $300 for second place, $200 for third place, and $50 for fourth place.

Proceeds from the event will be donated to the Commonwealth Cancer Association.

For more information, contact PIC at 234-7976 and request to be transferred to SEA department.

CHCC readmissions below national average—Muña

By JAYSON CAMACHO
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Health Center's statistic on readmissions has remained steady below the national average, according to Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. CEO Esther Muña.

This helps the CNMI's lone public hospital avoid fines from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services so it doesn't lose funds, Muña said.

She noted that throughout fiscal year 2014 (October 2013 to September 2014), compliance with CMS regulations has improved and that is evident in the survey conducted on Sept. 29, 2014.

As of September of last year, the hospital's readmission rate was at about 13.6 percent, much less than the national average of 20 percent.

CMS Medicare program fines any hospital that has high readmission rates. For example, if Medicare normally pays a hospital $15,000 for a kidney failure patient, a 1.5 percent penalty means Medicare would deduct $225 and pay just $14,775.

"The conditions that yield penalty for readmissions are for heart failure, heart attack, pneumonia, and chronic lung problems. Penalties are up to 3 percent and are calculated by Medicare contractors," Muña said.

Muna

The penalty does not apply to other Medicare payments for a hospital's general operating expenses, training of medical residents, or treatment of large numbers of low-income patients.

For penalized hospitals, CMS will reduce each payment for a patient stay from October 2014 through September 2015, which is the federal fiscal year.

CHC has remained at a steady pace compared to 2013 where its readmission rate was usually above 18 percent and even higher.

CMS made these laws so that hospitals would take care of its patients effectively and remaining steady helps with the reimbursement it receives from Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement.

"Most of the readmissions we see are because patients have not properly managed their diseases—they stopped their medications and haven't followed up with their doctor. This is why we have been accelerating our campaign for our residents to visit their doctor regularly, take their medication, and live an active and healthy life. Reopening the Internal Medicine clinic helps as well," Muña said.

CHCC has also been recognized with a "Pursuit of Excellence Certificate" from Mountain Pacific (Medicare Quality Improvement Organization) for maintaining lower admission rates.

CHCC's Corporate Quality and Performance Management department provides for the implementation and advancement of the hospital's programmatic requirements.

"All programs within CQPM for the hospital that includes infection control, utilization review/discharge planning, and quality management are continuously maintaining its programmatic efforts, as well as making significant progress toward meeting CMS' conditions of participations," Muña said.

"CQPM also coordinates the utilization review and discharge planning program. In fiscal year 2014, the program continued to monitor all hospital admissions for appropriateness. This initiative ensures that all admissions fall under a medical necessity as defined by best practice criteria and that the quality of care is delivered based on the standard of care and its medical necessity and that the services are reimbursable per CMS," she added.

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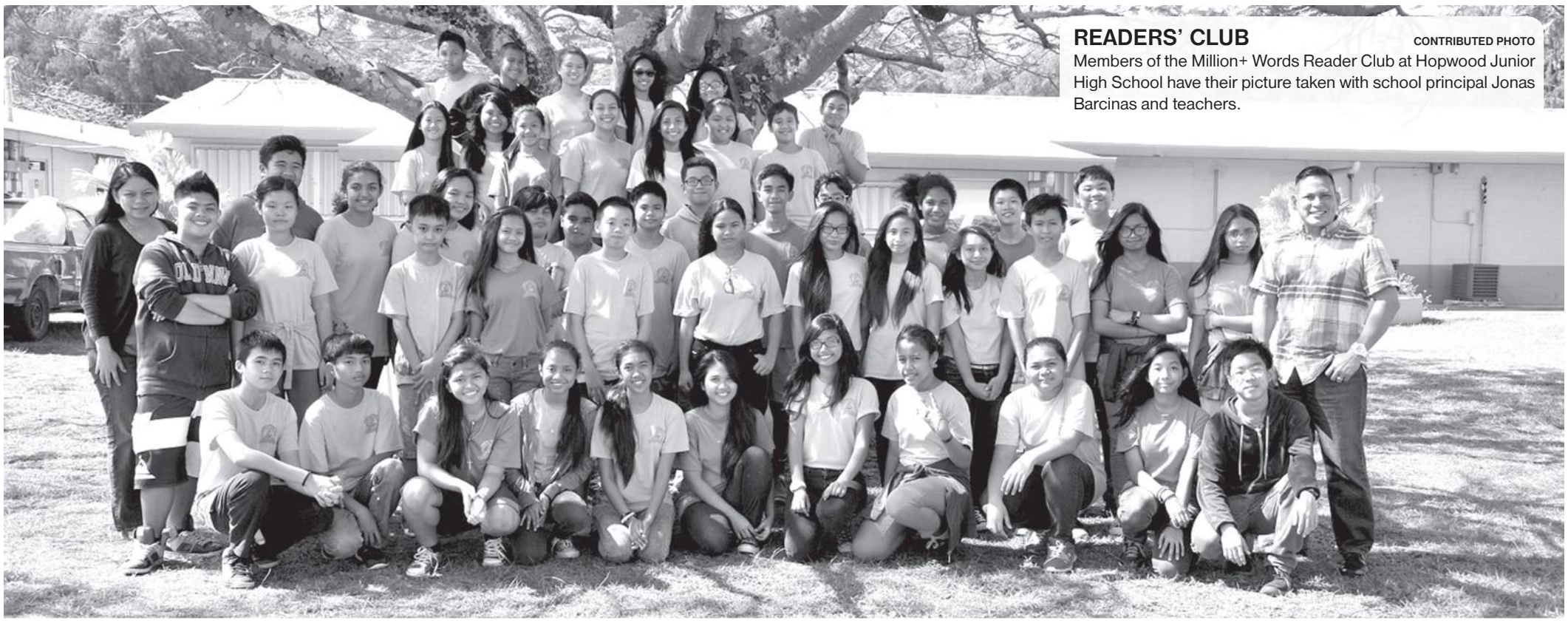

READERS' CLUB CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Members of the Million+ Words Reader Club at Hopwood Junior High School have their picture taken with school principal Jonas Barcinas and teachers.

Activities lined up for 'Parent Leadership Month'

By JOEL D. PINAROC
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REPORTER

The government will be supporting activities lined up this February, which has been declared "Parent Leadership Month."

A number of CNMI public and private entities have joined the Division of Youth Services, the Parent Education Program, and the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs to plan and implement activities in promoting this year's theme: "Strengthening Families through Parent Leadership."

The activities will center on parent leadership and education and will be held in various venues in the Commonwealth.

Following a government proclamation last Jan. 30, the parent leadership activities for February will include parent education and nutrition assistance programs, a visit to a local radio show, presentation programs with schools, and various parent education displays.

DYS and Parent Anonymous, a cause-oriented group established in 1969, will coordinate with other agencies regarding the activities. DYS recently gained PA accreditation.

Josephine C. Basa, facilitator for PA, said the group will continue to focus on the protection of children and parent leadership. The PA program includes intervention program for parents and treatment of child abuse and neglect.

MARK RABAGO

Lt. Gov. Ralph DLG. Torres and Department of Community and Cultural Affairs Secretary Laura Ogumoro lead an oath for responsible parenthood recited by volunteers from DCCA, Division of Youth Services, and Parent Anonymous last Friday when February was proclaimed Parent Leadership Month.

Parent Leadership Month signifies the importance of family strengthening programs and activities to help prevent child abuse and neglect incidents.

Through the DYS Parents Anonymous Inc. in the CNMI, "Parent Leadership Month" was initiated in February of 2004 to recognize the leadership roles of parents who have one way or another reached out to make a positive difference in their families and communities.

National Parent Leadership Month highlights the many opportunities available for parents, professionals, policymakers, and all interested community members to engage in collaboration with the goal of building and supporting strong and safe families.

Parent leaders in the CNMI are recognized annually through public and private schools as well as other community organizations. In partnership with the 2014 Parent Leader awardees and various community organizations, DCCA-DYS will honor the 2015 Parent Leader nominees, conduct outreach activities at various schools and the DCCA Nutrition Assistance Program and coordinate a Parent Development Workshop on Feb. 28, 2014.

The Parent Leadership Development Workshop will feature topics on healthy lifestyles to include nutrition, non-communicable disease prevention, parenting skills and networking activities with parent leaders and workshop participants. Community assistance agencies will also be on site to provide awareness of their programs and services.

For more information, contact Junnie Masga or Maria Olopai of the DYS Parent Education Program at 664/2552 or 664-2585.

FITIAL

From Page 1

things, that he has two independent sources of authority to investigate and prosecute those four charges.

Wiseman agreed with Hasselback that OPA has the authority to file the criminal charges against Fitial since he himself [Wiseman] and the Office of the Attorney General granted that authority.

Hasselback cited that on Aug. 17, 2012, Wiseman appointed him special prosecutor "to ensure the fair administration of justice."

Hasselback said the appointment was specifically limited to the investigation and prosecution of matters or persons that are connected to or relevant to the charges filed by the government against Buckingham.

Hasselback also noted that on July 3, 2013, then-AG Joseph Patrick San Nicolas appointed him special assistant attorney general to "complete accounting of the events surrounding Buckingham's escort.

In Fitial's opposition to the motion, attorney Stephen Nutting said Wiseman correctly found that OPA's authority to prosecute "the governor" ceased when he no longer was in office as "the governor."

Nutting said Hasselback's prior appointment to prosecute "the AG" was not an appointment to prosecute "the governor."

Nutting said Hasselback suggests that Wiseman failed to consider his prior appointment and that was clear error.

In his dismissal order last Nov. 6, Wiseman ruled that OPA has no authority to file the charges against Fitial, now a private citizen, and that the AG retains prosecutorial authority over such an action when the defendant is not currently in office.

OPA filed 13 charges against Fitial. The charges are related to the unauthorized release of a federal inmate, award of a sole-source American Recovery and Reinvestment Act contract, shielding of Buckingham from being served with penal summons, and the execution of a power purchase agreement contract related to the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.

Fitial pleaded not guilty to all charges.

TINIAN

From Page 1

the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Districts of Guam and the NMI both believe the DOJ will approve the settlement amount.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona on Friday granted the parties' request to move the trial date and set a status conference for Friday, Feb. 6, at 8:30am.

The U.S. government filed in November last year 158 criminal charges against Hong Kong Entertainment: one count of conspiracy to cause a financial institution to fail to file a currency transaction report or CTR, 155 counts of failure to file a CTR, one count of failure to file a suspicious activity report, and one count of failure to maintain an effective anti-money laundering program. The indictment also has a notice of forfeiture.

The initial indictment had charged HKE and then-VIP services manager George Que and then-casino manager Tim Blyth with 10 charges. Que and Blyth later entered into a settlement deal with the U.S. government in exchange for the dismissal of the criminal charges against them.

According to the indictment, HKE allowed gamblers at Tinian Dynasty to conduct transactions involving more than $10,000 without filing CTRs with the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network from September 2009 to April 25, 2013.

Tinian Dynasty allegedly failed to file about 3,640 CTRs for cash transactions over $10,000 as required by law. The total dollar amount of reportable currency transactions that were not filed is about $1.38 million.

FIRE

From Page 1

eventually died out at 11:54pm.

Alvarez said multiple units were dispatched but they were unable to directly access the fire due to rough terrain and no available entry routes for the fire trucks.

Alvarez said a primary survey of the fire was conducted and, as a precaution due to high winds and direction the fire travelled, some residents in the area were advised to evacuate their homes at 7:30pm.

The affected residents were allowed to return to their homes at 11:40pm after it was determined that the fire no longer posed an immediate threat to homes in the area.

Alvarez said firefighters monitored the fire until it eventually died out.

‘Green’ firms revive investment interest in CNMI

By JOEL D. PINAROC
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REPORTER

Companies involved in solar power and wind turbines have initiated exploratory meetings with government officials on possible investments in the Commonwealth.

Lt. Gov. Ralph DLG. Torres told reporters that companies involved in power plants, solar power, and wind turbines, among others, recently met with officials on Capital Hill on possible investment opportunities in the CNMI.

A company involved in hydrophonics—a way of growing plants without using soil—is also one of the companies present in the meeting, Torres said, along with companies involved in farming and cattle-raising.

Torres emphasized that the meetings were just preliminary discussions, which allowed the potential investors to ask questions on government permits, land use regulations, and even government incentives such as tax breaks.

Some companies also conducted “fact-finding” activities, Torres said.

It was not clear if the companies involved in solar power and wind turbines are part of the Green Energy Group, a consortium of at least three companies from different countries that in 2013 proposed to the government a renewable energy project that it said will bring to the islands as much as $250 million in investments.

The Green Energy Group has proposed to invest to build a wind turbine farm on Tinian that will produce 66 megawatts of electricity, expandable to 90MW and with a submarine cable to Saipan; 25MW of battery storage capacity; a 20MW power plant on Saipan; and 5MW of solar power on Saipan and Rota.

The Green Energy Group includes Green Pacific Co. Ltd., Green Globe Solution, and a Japanese company. The group was reportedly eyeing a long-term investment plan for the CNMI.

The use of renewable resources has been tackled by the Legislature and a law has been enacted that reset the deadline for renewable energy use on the island on or before Dec. 31, 2016.

In 2006, a law was enacted setting renewable portfolio standards requiring that a percentage of electrical energy be obtained from renewable energy resources. None of the standards have been achieved. The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. reportedly has yet to actually tap renewable energy sources.

Ex-Sports and Rec official arrested again for ‘ice’ and reckless driving

Former Division of Sports and Recreation deputy director John Benavente Reyes Jr., who has a pending criminal case for possession of illegal drugs, was arrested again Friday morning on the same charge and for reckless driving.

Reyes, 36, was taken to Superior Court yesterday on charges of illegal possession of a controlled substance and reckless driving. His bail was set at $2,250 cash. Preliminary hearing is on Feb. 10 at 1:30pm.

Assistant public defender Michael Sato was appointed as counsel for Reyes. Assistant attorney general Chester Hinds appeared for the government at the bail hearing.

Police detective Catherine B. Pangelinan stated in her report she was driving along Beach Road in Chalan Kanoa on Friday at 10:56am when she saw a blue car by Viva Poker heading north on the outer lane.

Pangelinan said the blue car, which she later found to be a Lexus with license plate ACH-868 and being driven by Reyes, accelerated and made a sudden switch to the inner lane, cutting off a vehicle in front. It then again made a sudden switch to the outer lane, causing a near collision with the same vehicle on the outer lane.

The Lexus again switched back to the inner lane, nearly hitting the front of a pickup truck by Dial-Rent-To-Own.

Pangelinan said she made a U-turn in front of Bobby’s Market, followed the Lexus and pulled it over near the Moon Night Store.

Pangelinan said as she explained the reason for the violator stop, Reyes immediately replied that the other car almost hit his vehicle.

Pangelinan cited Reyes for reckless driving, unsafe lane change, and failing to signal. She then arrested him.

Another detective found in Reyes’ front pocket a small ziplock bag that contained a white crystalline substance. The detective said the substance later tested presumptive positive for methamphetamine or “ice.”

During an inventory of the car, a detective found a branch of marijuana inside the glove compartment. A corrections officer also found in Reyes’ pouch a cut straw with the residue of a white crystalline substance.

Last Oct. 10, police arrested Reyes for alleged possession of “ice” and marijuana at a parking lot of a store in San Jose.

At a preliminary hearing, Associate Judge Joseph Camacho dismissed one count of possession of “ice” and one count of possession of marijuana.

The judge, however, found probable cause to charge Reyes with one count of possession of “ice.”

According to court records, Reyes had several prior traffic cases, mostly for violating the speed limit. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

CUC: Projects are meant to lower rates

By JAYSON CAMACHO
jayson_camacho@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Many of the projects the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. is currently undertaking are part of what CUC is doing to reduce rates for the community, according to board chair David Sablan Jr.

He stated this in response to Guam Sen. James V. Espaldon, who was present in CUC’s board meeting last Wednesday and had asked what CUC is currently doing to reduce its rates.

Espaldon, who spoke during the public commentary part of the meeting, said he had been attending CUC’s board meetings over the years but never hears CUC talk about how to reduce its rates.

Sablan, after a brief break, told *Saipan Tribune* that CUC has been discussing rate reduction at every board meeting they’ve had.

“Because that is our objective and what we’re focusing on so whatever we do, it is related to reducing its rates,” Sablan said.

Sablan said that they are fully aware of the ways that CUC is trying to reduce utility rates.

“It is happening now because of the oil we pay. We’re looking also at the savings noted by several of our divisions in CUC,” he said.

He said many of the projects being undertaken by CUC are ways of reducing its rates. One way is having more efficient engines to produce more power for less oil. Another is the Integrated Resource Plan being undertaken by Leidos Engineering LLC, which is looking for proposers for better and efficient energy system for CUC.

“Once the board approves the Integrated Resource Plan, that will become the ‘bible’ for the agency and will require CUC to follow. So if anyone who wants to come to us and propose some system of generating electricity and if it is within the plan, we’ll be willing to talk about it,” Sablan said.

Other projects include addressing the federal stipulated orders, geothermal finding, solar finding, commercial incentive tariff for large commercial customers to fulfill its grid system needs, and soon-to-be collection of past government arrears.

“So we’re expecting the Integrated Resource Plan soon and it will be this year and have better cost-effectiveness and I think that there will be some great saving comings for the people of the CNMI,” Sablan said.

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JA clubs go head-to-head in presentation/interview round

The Junior Achievement Clubs of Saipan Southern High School and Kagman High School went head-to-head last Saturday, showcasing the business models they have built and marketed over the school year.

SSHS' Pacific Bauble and KHS' Make Scents broke down the vision, marketing, production, public relations, and finance aspects of their projects. Each company also presented a commercial for their products.

Pacific Bauble offered silicon rubber, silver, or ribbon trinkets, or baubles.

To keep things diverse, the rubber baubles targets children, the silver trinkets target a "more mature demographic," and the ribbon baubles raise awareness for things like ovarian cancer.

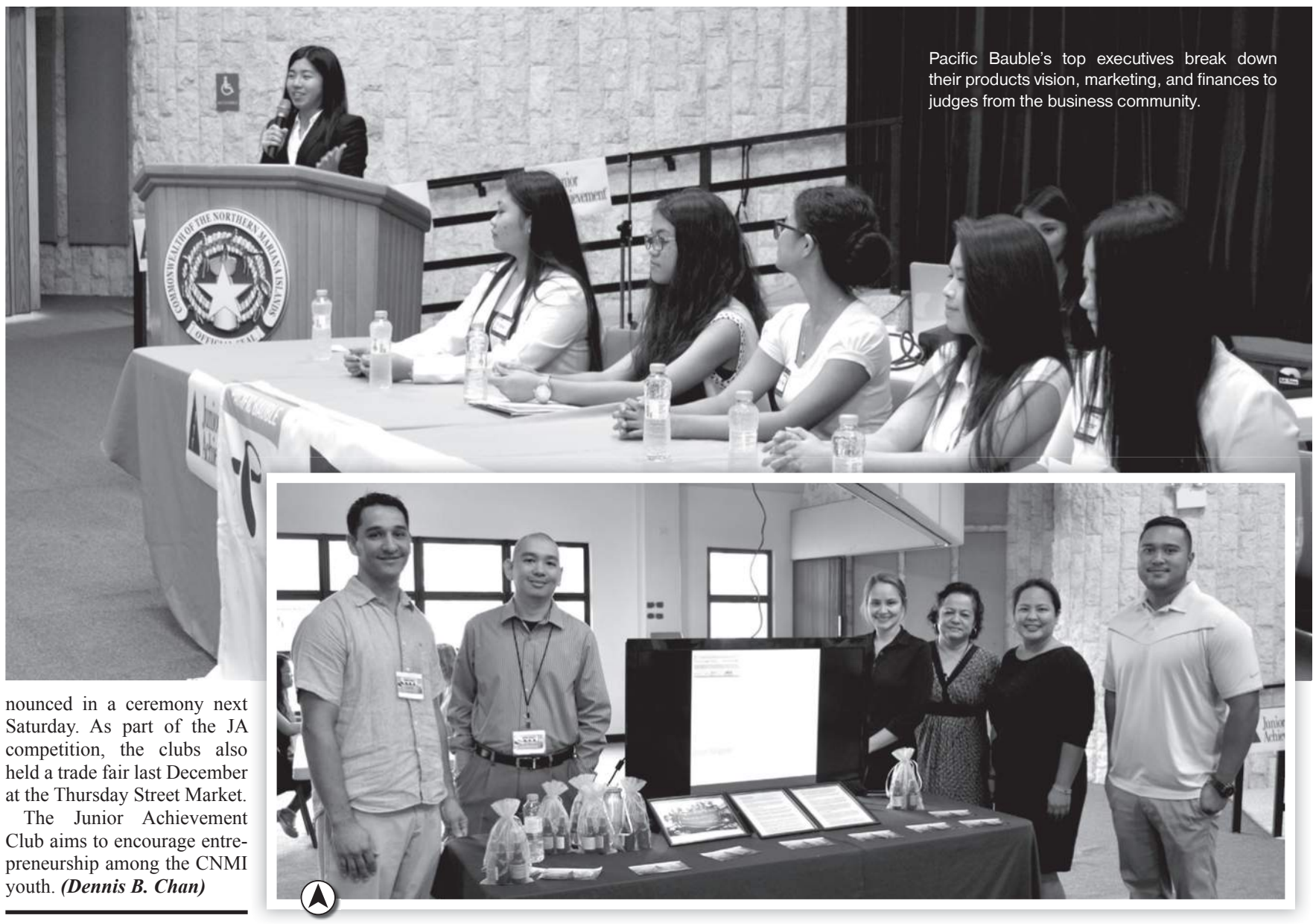
Make Scents showcased their product "Saipan Breeze," a fabric freshener made from the essential oils of tangerine, lime, geranium, lemongrass, rose, and rosemary. The product is made to fight mildew and mold in homes, offices, and cars.

Saturday's judges were leaders from the business community.

One-on-one interviews with company executives followed the project presentations.

Various awards will be announced in a ceremony next Saturday. As part of the JA competition, the clubs also held a trade fair last December at the Thursday Street Market.

The Junior Achievement Club aims to encourage entrepreneurship among the CNMI youth. ***(Dennis B. Chan)***



Pacific Bauble's top executives break down their products vision, marketing, and finances to judges from the business community.

The teacher and business advisors of Kagman High School's "Make Scents" team stand around their students' product display.

High surf and small craft advisories

Fresh to strong northeast winds, along with large north-northwest swell associated with a shear line, will create hazardous conditions for small craft operation across the local waters through Wednesday morning, according to the CNMI Homeland Security and Emergency Management.

A high surf advisory is now in effect until 4pm Wednesday.

Along north and northwest facing reefs, a small craft advisory is now in effect through Wednesday.

Combined seas of 9 to 11 feet will produce hazardous conditions for operators of small craft through Wednesday. Winds and seas should gradually subside starting Wednesday evening.

Those operating smaller vessels should avoid boating in these conditions. If travel by boat is necessary, exercise caution especially near reef lines and when entering or leaving harbors and inlets. ***(HSEM)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Office of the Secretary of Public Works
2nd floor-Oleai Joeten Commercial Center
Saipan, MP 96950

INVITATION FOR BIDS
DPW/FHWA-15-IFB-003

CROSS ISLAND ROAD AND DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS, PROJECT NO. CM-NH-0031(016), ROUTE 31 PHASE III, SAIPAN

Governor Eloy S. Inos and Lt. Governor Ralph Dlg. Torres, through the Department of Public Works (DPW) are soliciting sealed bids for the Cross Island Road and Drainage Improvements, Route 31 Phase III, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The project package will be available on or after **January 20, 2015** at Pacific Quick Print & Post, located in Middle Road, Garapan, Saipan. A non-refundable payment of state price to Pacific Quick Print & Post, is required to defray the cost of printing the package.

All interested bidders are also required to include Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC can be obtained at the Department of Commerce/Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) on Capitol Hill.

Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, dated May 24, 2001.

There will be a **Pre-bid Conference** for this project on **February 6, 2015**, 9:00 a.m. local time at the Department of Public Works Conference Room 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **March 10, 2015** to **Mr. Vicente C. Cabrera, Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with all prospective bidders.

Prospective bidders should examine and review the invitation for bids with care. If it should appear to a prospective bidder that the performance of the work under the contract or any of the matters relative thereto is not sufficiently described or explained in the invitation for bids, or that any discrepancy exists between different parts of the invitation for bids, or that full intent of the invitation for bids is not clear, then the prospective bidder shall submit a written request for clarification no later than ten (10) working days before the scheduled bid opening at 4:30 pm to **Mr. Vicente C. Cabrera, Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547.

The prospective bidder shall examine carefully the site of the proposed work and the invitation for bids before submitting a bid.
The Contracting Officer (CO) may, upon recommendation of the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR), issue an addendum notifying all prospective bidders known to have received an invitation for bids, or if issued after the deadline for submission of the notice of intention to bid, to those persons who submitted such notice, of any changes to the invitation for bids. The Department of Public Works will make every reasonable attempt to notify all persons who obtained the invitation for bids from the Technical Services Division by telephone to pick up the addendum or if the CO chooses, the addendum may be mailed or delivered personally or by facsimile machine. If the bid proposal requires the acknowledgment of addenda, the prospective bidder shall indicate the date of each addendum in the space provided. **It shall be the prospective bidder's responsibility to confirm the existence of any addendum by telephoning the COTR at (670) 234-9828/9838 no later than ten (10) working days before the scheduled bid opening**.

Sealed bids must be marked **"DPW/FHWA-15-IFB-003"**. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than 10:00 a.m. local time **March 20, 2015**. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional Seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notices of Intent to bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than 10:00 a.m. local time **March 20, 2015**, and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **March 20, 2015** and the bid documents must be received at the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base Drive, Saipan no later than **April 1, 2015**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, at 10:00 a.m. local time, **April 6, 2015**. However, if no notices of intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at 10:30 a.m. local time, on **March 20, 2015**.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars **($25,000.00)** a bid security of fifteen (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. **Bid security shall be on a bid bond, in cash, by certified check, cashiers check or other form acceptable to the government. A surety company shall hold the certificate of authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General**. Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: "Credit Account No. 44660". If a bid bond is submitted it must be accompanied by an Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC).

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations §70-30.3-245. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price for contracts greater than $25,000.00. Prior to the execution of the contract, the selected contractor shall submit:

a) A current license from the bonding company showing that it has authority to issue bond in the CNMI, and
b) A certification from the bonding company that the unencumbered value of its assets (exclusive of all outstanding commitments on other bond obligations) exceed the penal amount of each bond.

A contractor submitting an unacceptable payment or performance bond may be permitted a reasonable time, as determined by the P&S Director, to substitute an acceptable bond prior to executing a contract.

Acceptable assets are only:
1) Cash
2) US Gov't Securities
3) Stocks and Bonds traded on US Security Exchange
4) Real Property owned in fee simple in US; and
5) Irrevocable Letters of Credit

Performance time for completion of this project is **Three Hundred Thirty (330) working days** upon issuance of Notice to Proceed. Liquidated damages for delays beyond the established completion date will be assessed according to Table 108-1 of the standard Specification for Construction of Roads and Bridges on Federal Highway Projects, FP-03

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not effect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

/s/MARTIN C. SABLAN
Secretary of Public Works

/s/HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director of Procurement and Supply

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
Tel. (670) 234-6866/234-9447/234-7689/234-7670 - Fax. (670) 234-9021
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp
EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Vice Chairman of the Board, is hereby giving notice that a Regular Board Meeting is scheduled on **Wednesday, February 4, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. at the NMHC's Conference Room, Garapan, Saipan**. The public is welcome to submit written or oral comments regarding the agenda below. Individuals interested in attending the meeting and needing special accommodations are requested to contact NMHC in advance.

I. **PRELIMARY MATTERS**
   a. Call to Order
   b. Roll Call
   c. Adoption of Agenda
   d. Adoption of Minutes
      i. October 2, 2014 Special Board Meeting Minutes
      ii. December 11, 2014 Regular Board Meeting Minutes
      iii. December 17, 2014 Special Board Meeting Minutes
      iv. January 7, 2015 Special Board Meeting Minutes
II. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**
III. **CORPORATE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**
   a. Division Reports
   b. RD Matters
IV. **OLD BUSINESS**
   a. Garapan Annex RFP
V. **NEW BUSINESS**
   a. Loans for Review and Approval
VI. **LEGAL COUNSEL'S PENDING/ONGOING REPORT**
VII. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**
VIII. **OTHER MATTERS**
IX. **ADJOURNMENT**

(Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a) (7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session.)

/s/ **TOM GLENN A. QUITUGUA**
Vice Chairman of the Board

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

JENEQUA LOZANO, Petitioner, -vs- WILLIAM LOZANO Respondent,
FCD-DI CIVIL ACTION NO. 15-0031
SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION

TO THE ABOVE NAME RESPONDENT:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is on file with the court, within thirty (30) days after service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to Petitioner whose address is P.O. Box 66038 Beaufort, SC 29904 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at P.O. Box 500307 Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this summons, judgment by default may be taken against you for relief in the complaint.

Dated this 30th day of January, 2015

/s/ Clerk of Court

Torres wants more surveys on medicinal use of pot

By JOEL D. PINAROC
joel_pinaroc@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Lt. Gov. Ralph DLG. Torres believes more surveys are needed before further steps are taken regarding the proposed bill to legalize the use of marijuana for medicinal purposes in the Commonwealth.

He also said there are still a lot of questions on the proposed bill, and that the issue should be tackled with all the stakeholders, including the Division of Public Health and Public School System.

"I haven't looked at the bill yet, but there is legalization in the U.S. and the government is monitoring this issue," Torres said. "If it's medicinal, I would like to get more surveys. We need to determine how many medical cases are qualified for marijuana's medicinal use, and how many are we looking at as potential cases."

According to Torres, he'd also like to see if legalizing marijuana use could mean losing federal funding and by how much.

Talks to legalize marijuana resurfaced after Senate Bill 19-06 was prefiled last week by Sen. Sixto K. Igisomar (R-Saipan).

The bill claims that the legalization of marijuana is now a "less controversial" issue compared to a few years ago, now that Colorado and Washington have joined other states in approving marijuana for recreational use.

Currently, there are 24 states and territories including Guam, that have enacted laws to legalize marijuana, the new bill also states.

The move to allow the use of marijuana in the CNMI is hardly new and there have been several bills aimed to legalize its medicinal use in the CNMI, although none has so far prospered.

In 2012, a bill to legalize marijuana also pointed to potential revenues for the CNMI in addition to its medical benefits.

The new bill echoes previous claims that it will address the need for alternative treatment for patients suffering from debilitating illnesses such as cancer, glaucoma, multiple sclerosis, damage to the nervous system, epilepsy, and post-traumatic stress syndrome, among others. The bill claims the medicinal use of marijuana can be an alternative to more costly medical treatments for sufferers of these diseases.

The bill provides for the creation of a Medicinal Marijuana Advisory Board, tasked to review medical cases that would benefit from marijuana use and accept or review petitions to add medical conditions that qualify for the medicinal use of cannabis.

However, all penalties and provisions currently in place that prohibit the use and possession of marijuana without a prescription remain in full effect.

DEPUTY AG, CHIEF PROSECUTOR SWORN IN CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
CNMI Attorney General Edward Manibusan officiates the swearing-in of Lillian Tenorio as Deputy Attorney General, and Leonardo Rapadas as Criminal Chief Prosecutor on Monday, Feb. 2, 2015.

Japan's 'First Impression' visits NMI

Japan publisher First Impression recently visited Saipan to produce a magazine article and to film for a promotional DVD and music video to be issued in April 2015.

Ten staffers were on Saipan on Jan. 10-16, filming at numerous beaches, popular tourist spots, in downtown Garapan, and at Hyatt Regency Saipan. The publication will target men and women in their 20s and 30s and aims to promote travel during the winter holiday season. Circulations will be made on YouTube.

"Some of our most attractive features in the Northern Marianas are our beautiful beaches, and First Impression spent most of their time filming at those locations," said Marianas Visitors Authority marketing manager Bruce Bateman. "Those images will definitely help sell our destination during the cold winter months in Japan."

In fiscal year 2014, 114,366 visitors from Japan visited the Northern Mariana Islands, comprising 26 percent of total visitor arrivals. In December 2014, another 9,942 visitors from Japan visited the NMI for a total of 23,476 so far this fiscal year. ***(MVA)***

China-Guam charter flights planned for Lunar New Year

HAGATNA, Guam (AP)—A U.S.-based airline plans to operate charter flights for Chinese tourists to visit Guam's white beaches and warm waters during the upcoming Lunar New Year holidays.

Dynamic Airways will fly 15 flights to Guam from Beijing, Hangzhou, Nanjing, Shenyang and Chengdu using a Boeing 767 plane.

The flights are expected to bring about 3,000 Chinese tourists to the U.S. territory between Feb. 10 and March 6, the *Pacific Daily News* reported Friday.

Dynamic also flew charters to Guam during the same busy travel season last year.

United Airlines launched twice weekly flights direct from Shanghai to Guam last year. It is the only airline that operates regularly scheduled direct flights from a Chinese city to Guam.

Guam's Tourism 2020 master plan aims for 2 million tourists a year. It plans for 10 percent of the total to come from China.

Guam welcomed more than 16,000 Chinese travelers last year, a 45 percent increase from 2013.

The U.S. territory about 1,500 miles south of Tokyo has spent years trying to convince the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to start a visa waiver program for Chinese visitors, but has been unsuccessful.

The neighboring Northern Mariana Islands sees about 150,000 Chinese tourists every year, said Guam Gov. Eddie Calvo.

Starting in 2009, Homeland Security allowed qualified Chinese and Russian tourists entry into the Northern Marianas without the need for U.S. visas if their travel was for business or pleasure. They may stay visa-free for no more than 45 days.

UNITED STATES
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
COUNCIL on DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

NOTICE OF COUNCIL MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 12, the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities hereby gives notice that it will hold its 3rd Quarter General Membership Meeting on February 13, 2015, from 12:00pm –2:00pm at the Pacific Islands Club – Napu Room.

AGENDA

I. CALL TO ORDER
II. ROLL CALL
III. ADOPTION OF AGENDA
IV. ADOPTION OF MINUTES – August 29, 2014
V. ACTION ITEMS
a. Ratification/Approval of Renewal Trankilu Alternative Financing Program MOA between CDD and CAMI
b. Approval of Proposed FY 2015 Budget for DD Basic Grant
c. Approval of Proposed FY 2015 Budget for Assistive Technology Grant
VI. REPORT
a. Chairman
b. Executive Director
c. Fiscal Committee Chairperson
d. State Plan Committee Chairperson
VII. OLD BUSINESS
a. Update on National Disability Employment Awareness Month Activities
b. Update on Commonwealth Respite Service Program
VIII. NEW BUSINESS
a. March 2015 DD Awareness Month
b. Resource Directory
XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION
XII. MISCELLANEOUS
XIII. NEXT MEETING
XIV. ADJOURNMENT

Note: Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 13(a) 7, the Council may vote to meet in Executive Session. In accordance to the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend this meeting and require special accommodations are requested to call the Council 5 days in advance at 664-7000. The Public is welcome to submit written or 3 minutes oral comments regarding the agenda above.

/s/ Thomas J. Camacho
Chairman

This ad was paid for by funds from the DD Basic Grant Part A (Administrative)

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Judiciary Administrative Office
Guma' Hustisia · Iimwal Aweewe · House of Justice
P.O. Box 502165 • Saipan MP 96950
T: (670) 236-9805 • F: (670) 236-9702

Notice of Intent and Public Meeting

The Judicial Branch of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands has filed an application with the USDA Rural Development for financial assistance to enhance its Superior Court's computer hardware.

A public meeting for comments will be held at 4pm on Friday, February 13, 2015 in the ground floor atrium meeting room of the Guma' Hustisia, Iimwal Aweewe, House of Justice, Susupe, Saipan to discuss the proposed project and to provide the opportunity for public comment.

MEETING NOTICE

MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, the Marianas Visitors Authority, hereby gives notice that a **Regular Board of Directors Meeting** will be held on **Friday, February 6, 2015** at 9:00 a.m. at the MVA Conference Room San Jose Professional Building Saipan, MP 96950.

MEETING AGENDA

1) Preliminary Matters
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes – October 20, 2014 & November 25, 2014
2) Public Comments
3) Committee Reports
1. Finance
a. Audit Exit Conference Report
2. Personnel
3. Ad Hoc Committee
4) New Business
1. FY 2014 Audited Financial Statements
2. Television Exposure Investment (Japan)
3. Russia Ad Hoc
a. Project Expenditure Recommendations
4. Japan Ad Hoc
a. Approved Expenditure for International Festival of Cultures
5. Garapan Storm Drainage Cleaning Project
5) Old Business
1. Email ratification
1. Reconditioning of Mt. Tapochau Road
2. Legal Services contract renewal
3. Happy Children in Paradise 2015
2. Saipanda License Agreement
6) Miscellaneous/Announcements
1. Maps Proposal
2. Exit Survey Report
7) Executive Session
8) Adjournment

/s/ Marian Aldan-Pierce
Chair, MVA Board of Directors

Mt. Carmel recognizes 4 Parents of the Year

By THOMAS MANGLONA II
CORRESPONDENT

THOMAS A. MANGLONA II
From left, Annie Cepeda, representing her father Joaquin Cepeda, James Reyes, Evangeline Villar, and Chiharu Sato were named as Mount Carmel School's 2015 Parents of the Year.

Concluding its weeklong celebration of Catholic Schools Week, Mount Carmel School recognized its Parents of the Year for their outstanding volunteerism and commitment to the students, faculty, and staff. Unlike previous years, four parents were recognized last Friday during the school's Family Night.

James P. Reyes, Joaquin Cepeda, Chiharu Sato, and Evangeline Villar were recognized as the sole school's 2015 Parents of the Year.

"It is very fitting that we wrap up our celebration with Family Night. MCS is really a family. We could not function without our parent volunteers," school president Galvin Deleon Guerrero said in his remarks. "They give their time and resources and love and heart to the school."

Guerrero noted that one of the hardest jobs at the school isn't teaching or cleaning—it's directing traffic.

James Reyes was recognized for his efforts in directing traffic after school dismissal.

Reyes told *Saipan Tribune* that he "just wants to help and encourage other parents to do the same."

"I think it is a responsibility to volunteer," he added.

Annie Cepeda received the award on behalf of her father, who assists Reyes in after-school traffic directing. The Mount Carmel senior said she is elated that her father is being recognized. "I am happy that he is giving back to the school that I spent so many years in," she said.

Volunteer parent coach Chiharu Sato has brought her skill and passion for sports to the Mount Carmel family. Sato can be found on campus during weekends coaching the school's athletic teams for hours. She said, "Watching students enjoy playing sports is a great joy."

Evangeline Villar spends eight hours twice a week at Mount Carmel's library organizing books and allowing students to utilize the resources that would otherwise be unavailable to them.

She said she is blessed to have the time to serve the students and the school and vows to work even harder to make sure the library is a safe and quiet sanctuary for students to study.

"It inspires me to also see students who really want to learn and read and spend their time in the library. It makes me want to do an even better job."

Student Council president Andrea Lazaro said families are the backbone of the school community.

"I think that the Parents of the Year truly deserve the recognition. They show their commitment to the school through service and that's really admirable," she said.

PCG invites public to a tour of the Philippines

The Philippine Consulate General wishes to invite interested parties to join the annual "Ambassador, Consuls General and Tourism Directors Tour to the Philippines" to be held from July 6 to 10, 2015.

The ACGTDT is a project of the Philippine Foreign Service Posts in the United States, including the Philippine Consulate General in Guam, in cooperation with the representatives of the Department of Tourism assigned in key cities in North America. It aims to promote the Philippines not only as a tourist destination but also as a viable investment option and retirement haven. It caters to foreign nationals and to former Filipinos as well as dual citizens.

This year is the tenth time the project is being undertaken and the basic tour package includes accommodation for four days and three nights and visits to key sites in Manila and Cebu. The program also includes a visit to Malacañang, the Presidential Palace.

Last year, close to 300 participants joined the ACGTDT, 24 of whom came from Guam. Hopefully, this year the Consulate General's goal is to double the participants from Guam or even reach as high as 100 with delegates from Saipan, Palau, Micronesia and Marshall Islands.

While the details of the tour package are still being finalized, interested participants are encouraged to "save the date" or "block off their calendars" on the affected dates to avoid conflict with other travel and business plans.

For more information on the ACGTDT, contact Mildred Sayurin at (671) 646-4620/30 or email pcgagana@gmail.com or cultural.pcgagana@gmail.com. ***(PCG)***

FIRST FRIDAY FILMS

Free film looks at aquaculture industry

Please join First Friday Films for a free film about aquaculture called *Farming the Seas* to be shown at American Memorial Park on Friday, Feb. 6 at 6:30pm.

"Farming the Seas" examines the problems and potential of global aquaculture industry. The industry has the potential to alleviate the over-fishing problem but fish farms that raise carnivorous species can exacerbate it. Fish farms can also spread disease and genetic pollution to wild species of fish. The film also examines types of aquaculture that hold the most promise for taking pressure off the world's oceans—the culture of herbivorous fish species and shellfish.

Before the film, aquaculture extension agent and program leader at NMC CREES, Michael Ogo, will share his extensive experience and knowledge about aquaculture in the CNMI. Ogo is the former vice president of operations at Saipan Aquaculture Co. and has been doing aquaculture professionally for the last 15 years. He helped establish the CNMI Aquaculture Producers Association, built the first commercial-scale tilapia farm on Saipan, and developed the aquaponics and hydroponics industry in the CNMI.

First Friday Films is a partnership between American Memorial Park, the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality and the CNMI Humanities Council with support from other organizations and individuals. This particular film is sponsored by BECQ. As always, our film events are free and open to the public. This event will run approximately 90 minutes. ***(BECQ)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Chamber membership meeting on Wednesday

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce will hold its February general membership meeting this Wednesday, Feb. 4, at Hyatt Sandcastle. Luncheon begins at 11:30am, with the meeting starting promptly at noon. Luncheon cost for SCC members is $20. Non-member cost is $30.

Also, the Chamber will hold an organizational meeting for the Saipan Chamber Young Professionals on Tuesday, Feb. 10, at 10am in the Chamber conference room. Please mark your calendar to attend, or send one of your managers who may be interested in participating in our new program, which targets mid-level managers and up and coming professionals ages 18-35. ***(SCC)***

Joeten-Kiyu library closed this week

This is to inform the public that the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library will be closed from Feb. 3 to Feb. 7, 2015, due to its annual inventory. Thank you for your understanding. For more information, call 235-7322/23. ***(JKPL)***

Private schools sets membership meeting on Wed.

The Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools is inviting all private schools in the CNMI to attend an open membership meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 4, at 3:30pm at Mount Carmel School's faculty lounge. The purpose of the meeting will be to allow current and prospective members of the coalition to submit required items for membership, as well as to move forward with several initiatives. Since its founding, the CCOPS has represented private schools on the CNMI BOE by electing a non-public school representative to the BOE who is then appointed by the CNMI governor to the BOE. Private schools on Rota and Tinian may also participate in the CCOPS meeting via Google Hangouts. For more information about the CCOPS, contact the CCOPS president, Galvin Deleon Guerrero, at galvin.deleonguerrero@gmail.com. ***(CCOPS)***

Free training on effective parenting

Brilliant Star School will be offering a "Parent Effectiveness Training" at no charge. The training will be held on Feb. 4 from 6:30pm to 8pm at the Brilliant Star School located on Navy Hill. The talk is appropriate for parents of all age children. The presenter, Ganasini Iris, holds a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from State University of New York and a master's degree in Early Childhood Education from the University of Oregon. For more information contact Brilliant Star School at (670) 323-STAR (7827). ***(PR)***

BECQ brigade sets Tank Beach cleanup on Sat.

The Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality's Cleanup Brigade will be picking up trash at Tank Beach on Saturday, Feb. 7, 2015, at 8am. If you would like to volunteer, meet the BECQ representatives on Saturday at the Tank Beach entrance at 8am. Volunteers will split into groups and clean until 10am and break for drinks and then continue, if needed.

This month, outstanding brigade volunteers who participated in at least 10 monthly cleanups will receive a brigade cap and those who participated in at least three cleanups will receive a brigade T-shirt.

For more information about volunteering, contact the BECQ office at 664-8500/1. ***(BECQ)***

Air Force, Navy training on FDM, at Warning Area 517

The U.S. Air Force will conduct training at the island of Farallon de Mendinilla during the following times:

- Feb. 3, from 9am to 4pm
- Feb. 4, from 9am to 8pm
- Feb. 5, from 10am to 1:30pm and 3-9:30pm
- Feb. 6, from 6am to 6pm

The U.S. Navy will conduct training at Warning Area 517 on Feb. 3-4 from noon to 8pm

The general public especially fishermen, commercial pilots and marine tour operators are advised to stay clear from the area during the dates and times indicated.

The general location of the training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla will be on a 10-nautical mile radius on all quadrants. W-517 is an irregular shaped polygon comprising of 14,000 nautical square miles of airspace that begins south of Guam and extends south-southwest in international waters. ***(PR)***

Family grief support meeting on Feb. 5

The Compassionate Friends of Saipan will be holding its monthly grief support meeting on Thursday Feb. 5, from 6pm to 7:30pm, in the NMPASI conference room on Middle Road, in Gualo Rai. The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others to be supportive. For more information, e-mail tcfSaipan@gmail.com or call Jill Derickson (989-9821) or Donna Krum (783-0755). To learn more about The Compassionate Friends, visit their website at www.compassionatefriends.org. ***(PR)***

Study shows importance of tuna for public health in the Pacific

NOUMEA, New Caledonia—In the ongoing battle against obesity, heart disease and diabetes in the Pacific region, a new study reveals that allocating sufficient tuna for local consumption and keeping it affordable could significantly improve health outcomes.

Pacific Island communities have the highest rates of obesity and diabetes in the world, primarily because traditional foods such as root crops, fish and shellfish are being replaced by relatively cheap, energy-dense and nutritionally-poor imported foods.

Increased consumption of fish and shellfish, which are rich in protein, essential fatty acids, vitamins and minerals, is seen as an important part of the solution.

The study, published in the journal, Marine Policy, found that by 2020, people in the 22 Pacific Island countries and territories will need 268,000 tons of fish per annum for food security, increasing to 344,000 tons by 2035. Current total fish consumption is around 210,000 tons per annum, and most of this fish is caught from coral reefs.

However, coastal fisheries based on coral reefs in many Pacific Island countries and territories do not have the capacity to produce more fish. In fact, there will be fewer reef fish per person as human populations increase.

"A gap is emerging between how much fish can be harvested sustainably from well-managed reefs and the quantity of fish recommended for good nutrition," the Director of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community's Fisheries Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems Division, Moses Amos, said.

"The gap will increase dramatically in some countries in the years ahead. This study shows how the rich tuna resources of the region can be used to fill the gap and supply the fish needed for healthy diets.

"Pacific Island countries and territories derive significant benefits from tuna in terms of government revenue and in the way fishing fleets and canneries contribute to their GDP. We now need to diversify the benefits by taking steps to allocate a suitable portion of the tuna catch to feed our people," Amos said.

The study argues that the goal of making more tuna available for local food security should be included in regional and national tuna management plans to ensure sufficient quantities are allocated.

It found that relatively small percentages of the average tuna catch from the exclusive economic zones of Pacific Island countries are expected to be needed for food security – about two per cent in 2020, rising to six per cent by 2035. Less than one per cent of the average tuna catch is estimated to be used currently for local consumption.

Across the region, tuna will need to provide 12 percent of the fish required for good nutrition in 2020 and 25 percent in 2035, with fish and shellfish species from coral reef habitats continuing to provide the remainder.

The study involved fisheries and health experts from SPC, Conservation International, University of Wollongong, WorldFish, the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency, L'Institut de recherche pour le développement, CSIRO, the University of Washington and Gillett, Preston and Associates.

The study team identified three 'vehicles' for increasing local access to tuna: expanding the use of nearshore fish aggregating devices to assist small-scale fishers to catch tuna, distributing small tuna and bycatch offloaded by industrial fleets at regional ports, and improving the availability of canned tuna for inland populations.

"As promising as these interventions are, investments and new policies are needed to implement them effectively," said Dr Johann Bell from Conservation International's Betty and Gordon Moore Center for Science and Oceans and the University of Wollongong, who led the study.

"Investments in nearshore FADs will be maximized by identifying the best sites, monitoring catches to fine-tune the design and deployment of the devices, providing training in FAD fishing techniques, and harmonizing the use of FADs within and between coastal communities," Bell said.

The industrial fishing exclusion zones around all Pacific Island countries and territories, declared to provide coastal communities with access to tuna, also need to be examined to check whether they are working effectively.

The study also concluded that further improvements to stock assessments of the region's four species of tuna—skipjack, yellowfin, bigeye and albacore—and more observations about how the ecosystems supporting tuna respond to fishing pressure, climatic variability and climate change, would improve knowledge about the distribution and abundance of tuna and help secure the economic and food security benefits available from these valuable fish.

In conjunction with governments in the region and other prospective partners, SPC is now discussing the investments required to greatly expand the number of nearshore FADs, and to develop the small businesses and infrastructure needed to distribute small tuna and bycatch offloaded by purse-seine vessels at regional ports during transhipping operations. ***(SPC)***

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

You may still be tiny but you stole the hearts of one and all. Happy first birthday, Darshwana T. Chhetri! We love you! Greetings come from your family and friends.

Kia'aina to make 1st official visit to US Virgin Islands

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Interior Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Esther Kia'aina will be making her first official visit to the U.S. Virgin Islands this week and will be meeting with Gov. Kenneth Mapp and his administration and other territorial leaders.

Meetings are also scheduled with the Senate president; chief justice; president of the St. Thomas Chamber of Commerce; president of the University of the Virgin Islands; acting commissioner of the Department of Planning and Natural Resource & Department of Agriculture; engineering administrator of the Department of Public Works; director of State Historic Preservation Office; St. John administrator; CEO of the Juan F. Luis Hospital; and executive director of the Water and Power Authority.

Kia'aina

The Department of the Interior is responsible for coordinating federal policy with respect to the territories of American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and administering and overseeing U.S. federal assistance provided to the Freely Associated States of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau under the Compacts of Free Association. The Office of Insular Affairs mission is to foster economic opportunities, promote government efficiency, and improve the quality of life for the people of the insular areas. ***(DOI)***

ALTER CITY GROUP

ALTER CITY GROUP is a renowned and successful international real estate and property development and investment company with offices in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Zhuhai and Headquarters located in Macau. Current key projects include developing, constructing and operating 2 five-star first class integrated hotels and casino resort, an 18-hole international golf course, a water themed park, VIP villas and other associated facilities complex locates at San Jose, Tinian in CNMI.

Our recent expansion in CNMI has created exciting opportunities and we now invite competent candidates to join us for a challenging career in our growing team within our organization.

OPERATIONS MANAGER

Responsibilities:
- Responsible for the purchase of materials, plan inventory and ensure operations efficiency;
- Responsible and lead for a wide ranging for a wide ranging brief-facilities management, people management and finance;
- Contribute towards the achievement of Company's strategic and operational objectives;
- Managing all security and other systems ensuring all procedures are complied with and appropriate risks are assessed;
- Conducting and implementing OM & workflow;
- Ensures that the business achieves the required licenses and safety standards to comply with national health, fire and safety regulations thus ensuring the safety of the corporate staff and public.
- Performs quality controls and implement/monitor production KPI's including setting operational goals to meet.
- Manage and implement any software necessary for business growth.

Qualifications:
- College graduate;
- Minimum of 8 years of related experience;
- Excellent communications skills (verbal and written);
- Multilingual in the Chamorro, Chinese and/or Japanese or Korean languages is advantageous;
- Must be willing to work flexible hours.

CLIENT RELATIONSHIP MANAGER

Responsibilities:
- Correspond with employees and external stakeholders to keep them informed of Company developments;
- Communicate externally with the media and other interested parties to announce corporate news and discuss organizational changes in a way that attempts to maintain positive image of the Company;
- Identify key media opportunities, plan public relations programs including the preparation of cost budgets;
- Present controversy discussions/debates on behalf of the organization to the government;
- Respond to inquiries from the public, media and other organizations;
- Arrange interviews with journalists, prepare and distribute media releases and make statements to the media/public;
- Manage the creation and development of print and online advertising, email marketing, website management and content development, press releases, bylined articles, white papers, corporate videos and any marketing collateral.

Qualifications:
- College graduate;
- Minimum of 1-2 years of related experience;
- Excellent communications skills (verbal and written);
- Must be willing to work flexible hours.

PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGER

Responsibilities:
- Manage public relations department by planning, directing or coordinating activities designed to create and maintain a favorable public image or raise issue awareness for the Company;
- Maintain effective working relationships with local and municipal government officials and media representatives;
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with clients, government officials, and media representatives and use of these relationships to develop new business opportunities;
- Write effective press releases, prepare information for media kits and develop and maintain Company internet or intranet web pages;
- Identify main client groups and audiences, determine the best way to communicate publicity information to them and develop and implement a communication plan;
- Draft speeches for Company executives and arrange interviews and other form of contact;
- Evaluate advertising and promotion programs for compatibility with public relations efforts;
- Assign, supervise and review the activities of the Public Relations staff.

Qualifications:
- College graduate;
- Excellent communications skills (verbal and written);
- Multilingual in the Chamorro, Chinese and/or Japanese or Korean languages is advantageous;
- Must be willing to work flexible hours.

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING MANAGER

Responsibilities:
- Plan, execute and finalize assigned project according to strict deadlines and within budget including acquiring resources and coordinating the efforts of team members, and third party contractors or consultants in order to deliver according to plan;
- Setting up accounting system for new hotels and provide directions and support to all hotels in the group;
- Responsible for full set of accounting including tax returns and independently oversee the financial daily operation;
- Administer and monitor the financial system on order to ensure that the municipal finances are maintained in an accurate and timely manner;
- Oversee the accounts payable and accounts receivable systems in order to ensure complete and accurate records of all monies;
- Prepare monthly financial statement and financial reports;
- Responsible for forecasting and budgeting;
- Maintain fixed asset and depreciation registers on a monthly/quarterly basis;

Qualifications:
- Must be a Certified Public Accountant;
- Minimum of 2-4 years of related experience;

OPERATIONS ASSISTANT

Responsibilities:
- Assist in resolving problems on day-to-day basis in all operational areas;
- Ensure that operational activities are executed within allotted budget, timelines and corporate policy;
- Responsible for the execution of the regulations development, procedures, and operating instructions tailored to the specific need of the business and addresses such functions as logistics and facilities management, range operations and administrative requirements, etc.;
- Responsible for the management of supply chain, order processing including thorough documentation;
- Maintain database of both internal and external needs;
- Prepare responses to correspondence containing routine inquires;
- Perform other duties as assigned.

Qualifications:
- High school graduate;
- Minimum of 5 years related experience;
- Excellent communications skills (verbal and written);
- Multilingual in the Chamorro, Chinese and/or Japanese or Korean languages is advantageous;
- Must be willing to work flexible hours.

HUMAN RESOURCES ASSISTANT

Responsibilities:
- Provide full support to HR Manager by assisting in managing day-to-day office admin or HR activities;
- Assist in managing policies, procedures and conduct internal employee programs;
- Maintain and updated employee files, and job specification for each hiring positions;
- Hands on in HR Database Management, Legal Compliance/Code of Conduct, Organization Development/Process Improvement, Performance & Career Management, Recruitment & Selection, etc.;
- Arrange official appointments and meetings, record minutes and distribute;
- Manage the office administration system to secure overall Company efficiency, productivity and cost effectiveness;
- Perform other HR duties as assigned.

Qualifications:
- High school graduate;
- Minimum of 1-2 years related experience;
- Excellent communications skills (verbal and written);
- Multilingual in the Chamorro, Chinese and/or Japanese or Korean languages is advantageous;
- Must be willing to work flexible hours.

PUBLIC RELATIONS COORDINATOR

Responsibilities:
- Engage in promoting or creating an intended public image for the Company;
- Respond to requests for information from the media;
- Write press releases and other media communications for promotion;
- Establish or maintain cooperative relationships with representatives of community, consumer, employee or public interest group;
- Prepare or edit organizational publications such as employee newsletters or stockholders reports for internal and external audiences;
- Arrange public appearances, lectures, contests or exhibits for client to increase product of service awareness or to promote goodwill;
- Perform all other tasks assigned by management;
- Field media inquiries and present proposed responses for management;

Qualifications:
- Associate's degree;
- Minimum of 2-4 years related experience;
- Excellent communications skills (verbal and written);
- Must be willing to work flexible hours.

ACCOUNTING ASSISTANT

Responsibilities:
- Managing bank accounts;
- Consolidating annual accounting statements;
- Preparing tax returns;
- Assisting in any form of auditing;
- Reconciling balance sheets;
- Preparing financial reports;
- Assist in other financial reporting functions when need arise;
- Perform other as hoc tasks.

Qualifications:
- Associate's degree;
- Minimum of 1-2 year related experience.

Qualified applicants must submit a resume with a cover letter to hr.cnmi@altercitygroup.com by FEBRUARY 6, 2015. Salary is commensurate with work experience and education.

For inquiries, please contact Robert T. Torres, Esq. at 234-7859 or by email at rttlaw@pticom.com.

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

Netanyahu should rethink his US trip

It's one thing for House Speaker John Boehner to use his pulpit to air grievances with President Barack Obama. But Boehner and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu are playing with fire by colluding to apply political pressure on Obama and meddle with the direction of a critical national security issue.

In January, Boehner invited Netanyahu to address a joint session of Congress about Iran's nuclear program. Netanyahu accepted, initially scheduling the visit for Feb. 11 but later postponing it to March 3. Neither consulted the White House and, reportedly, sought to keep the Obama administration out of the loop as details were worked out between the speaker and the Israeli Embassy in Washington.

The White House is justified in refusing to meet with Netanyahu because such political stunts do not deserve to be dignified with a diplomatic embrace. Dominion over foreign policy rests with the president, not Boehner.

The speaker and Netanyahu say that the administration has not been tough enough and that current international sanctions don't go far enough to defang Iran's nuclear weapons potential. The sanctions, which had to be painstakingly negotiated among all five U.N. Security Council permanent members, have applied unprecedented pressure and, even by Iran's and Israel's acknowledgment, have had a serious effect on the Islamic republic's economy.

The Obama administration is known to differ sharply with Netanyahu on various Middle Eastern issues. But the snub to Netanyahu is doubly justified because Israeli parliamentary elections are set for two weeks after the March 3 visit. The prime minister is struggling in polls, and suspicions are rife that Netanyahu wants to use his congressional speech to bolster his electoral prospects.

U.S. diplomacy on such a serious issue as Iranian nuclear weapons must not be swayed by a foreign politician's reelection bid. In fact, Netanyahu himself blasted a previous Israeli prime minister for doing exactly the kind of pre-vote maneuver he plans to do.

Israeli leaders from across the political spectrum are questioning Netanyahu's wisdom. They warn that the trip could damage the already strained relationship with the Obama White House and, perhaps more important, derail the Iran negotiations at a crucial phase in the talks. Netanyahu is unlikely to tell Congress anything members haven't already heard, so why the urgency?

Israel has no closer ally in the world than the United States. For the sake of that alliance, and to remove any hint of political manipulation, Netanyahu should cancel this trip and organize a new one once elections are over in his country. And this time, he should work through the White House instead of around it.

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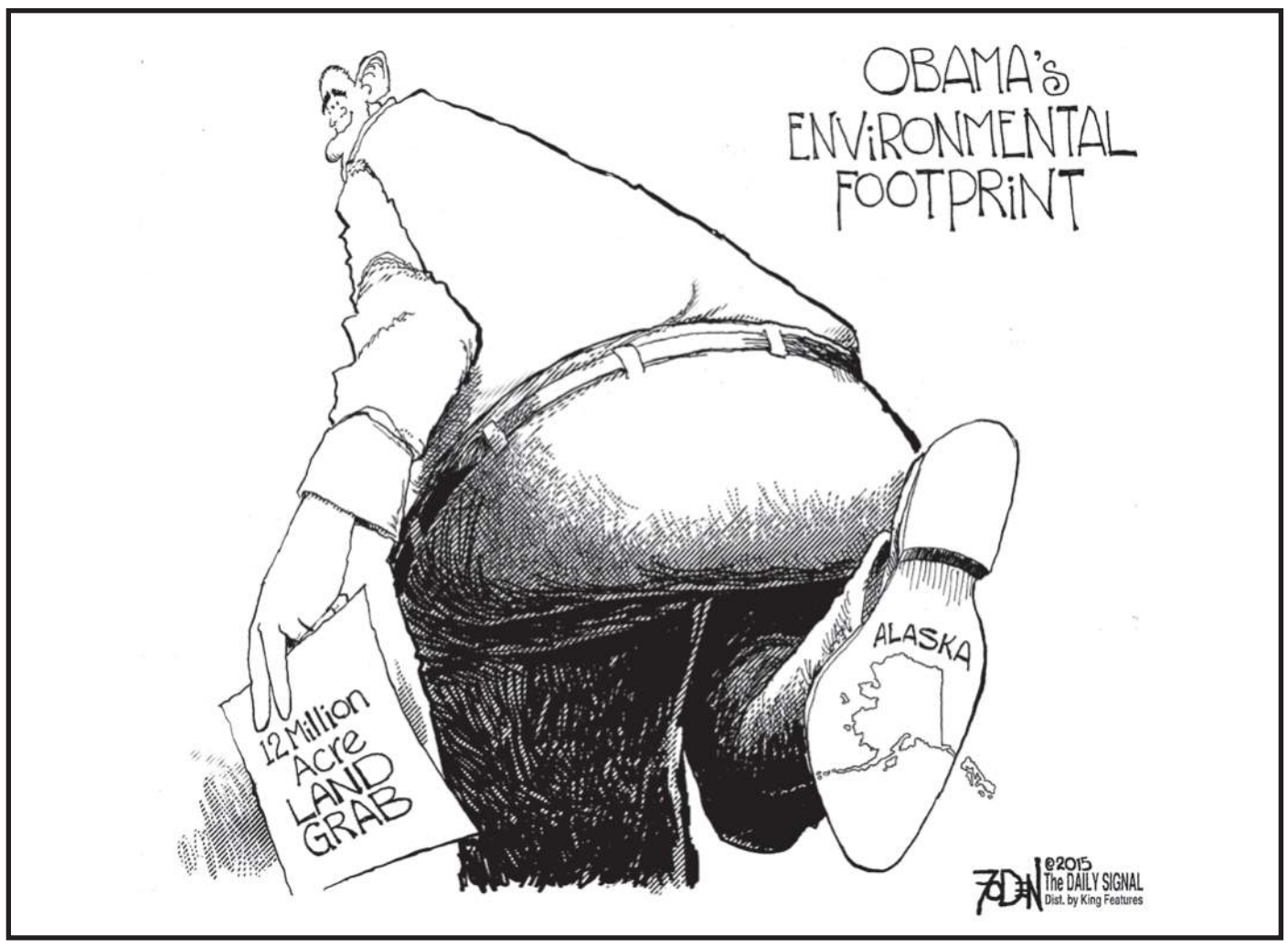


Charlie Hebdo's free-speech guerrillas focus on what divides

By LALITA CLOZEL
THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

The attack occurred just a few minutes before I arrived at the Charles de Gaulle Airport on one of my yearly homecoming trips.

By midday Jan. 7, 12 people, including some of France's most well-known cartoonists, had been shot in and around the Charlie Hebdo offices in the hipster Le Marais neighborhood.

That evening, from the base of the Marianne statue, I saw Place de la Republique overtaken by thousands of mourners. Some tried to chant, and, yes, a couple of people burned pages of the Quran, but they were promptly booed.

For the most part, we were there to grieve for cartoonists who were regarded with affection, though also with a degree of disapproval by some. They were viewed as you might a turbulent little cousin, a bright lad who could be downright rude at times but who should never have to see the end of a gun barrel. There was no arguing that.

Soon enough, the spontaneous wave of grief was submerged by one of the most popular hashtags in history and the largest march Paris had ever seen. The emotional reaction to these deaths was turned into a movement for free speech that ultimately flopped when the world realized the dead cartoonists were more antiheroes than martyrs.

That was the problem with Charlie Hebdo, too. In recent years, it invoked abstract principles to justify its repeated barbs against Islam, which is already under siege in France on multiple fronts. The paper was founded by old-time leftist intellectuals—people who considered themselves humanists, anti-racists, anti-capitalists, and, thus, secularists.

An ancestor of Charlie Hebdo, Hara-Kiri, entertained a generation of '60s activists, including my father. It was crude, irreverent, and provocative. And the juvenile curmudgeons at Charlie Hebdo camped out in that era, convinced that the best way to liberate society was by stamping out the influence of religion. This conviction turned into a vendetta against Islamic fundamentalism.

Tensions came to a head—or so we thought—when the old Charlie Hebdo offices were firebombed in 2011. They were about to print an issue "guest-edited" by the prophet Muhammad, who was depicted on the cover with a wild smile saying: "100 lashes of the whip if you don't die laughing!"

By then, Muhammad caricatures were a Charlie Hebdo staple, and the paper's cartoonists, particularly editor Stephane Charbonnier, had fashioned themselves as free-speech guerrillas.

"I will continue, even if I have to do it alone," he said on a France 2 talk show.

A rather dour mission for a cartoonist.

But the leftist free-speech advocates were giving ammunition to the extreme right, especially the Front National, which abhors the presence of Islam in France.

No love was lost between those strange bedfellows. Charlie Hebdo had even petitioned to have the Front National banned. The party had sued the paper several times and its leader, Marine Le Pen, was savaged on Charlie's pages.

Still, both shared a fervent belief in straitjacket secularism, which the Front National has deftly used as a weapon to defend France's cherished Catholic traditions from Muslims. The Jan. 7 attacks are Le Pen's chance to gloat.

"France, land of human rights and freedoms, was attacked on its own soil by a totalitarian ideology: Islamic fundamentalism," she wrote in a New York Times op-ed.

With her party's ideology shaping the debate, there is rising sentiment in France that the onus is now on Muslims to prove they are "moderate," and not on the side of the terrorists.

"It's up to them to show that you can be French and Muslim and still respect secular rules," Le Pen told Al Jazeera English.

Just as Charlie Hebdo's militant secularism has been exploited by its sworn political enemy, the trauma of the Paris shootings has been used to divide in every possible way.

Everyone had a field day bombarding #JeSuisCharlie, from politicians to the polarized media to naive commentators.

Uninvited to the Paris march, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, standing next to the premier of France, advised French Jews that Israel is their home.

Newcomers to Charlie Hebdo, upon seeing its hooked-nose Muhammad caricatures, are calling the cartoonists "racist" or "bigoted," mistaking an attack on a religion for an attack on race.

The remaining staff at Charlie Hebdo, those free-speech champs, are calling the newspapers that did not reprint their drawings "wimps."

All of this detracts from the images that should stay imprinted in our minds: the men wearing balaclavas and armed with AK-47s who broke into a weekly meeting of cartoonists; blood splattered in the hallways of a cramped newsroom; a Muslim cop shot execution-style while he was on the ground, face down; a kosher supermarket surrounded by police, with Jewish shoppers held hostage inside; and the 17 killed in two attacks.

We should be united in shock, horror, and a sense of shared loss. Instead, we have focused on what divides us.

Lalita Clozel is a freelance journalist in Washington and a former Philadelphia Inquirer *intern who grew up in France. She wrote this for the* Inquirer.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

How India is assassinating Gandhi's legacy

By ARUN GANDHI
Tribune News Services

Arun Gandhi is the grandson of Mahatma Gandhi and the author of several books on poverty, politics and nonviolence. He wrote this for Progressive Media Project, a source of liberal commentary on domestic and international issues; it is affiliated with The Progressive *magazine.*

On Jan. 30, 1948, my grandfather Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the great Indian leader and champion of nonviolence, fell to an assassin's bullets. Indian society has recently faced a sustained assault by people of the same ideological ilk as the man who fired those fatal shots.

India's drift away from Gandhi's ideals of nonviolence and respect for religious pluralism has been steady over the last few decades. However, events since the national election that made Narendra Modi in charge of the country last May have shown that what is now taking place is a brazen assassination of the Mahatma's legacy.

Matters have come to a point where Gandhi's assassin, Nathuram Godse, has been praised by a member of India's Parliament belonging to the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). A Hindu extremist organization has plans to celebrate the assassination and install the assassin's statue in various parts of the country.

Prime Minister Modi—who since assuming office has both been accorded a warm welcome by President Obama and played host to him in India—was long banned from entering the United States. This was because of a horrific pogrom in 2002 that happened in the state of Gujarat (Gandhi's home province) while he was in charge.

Clearly, his electoral victory has emboldened supremacist groups across the country. This is because the Modi and the ruling party's ideological roots lie in the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a vast ultranationalist outfit that positions itself as a service organization but seeks to dismantle India's secular polity in order to impose a Hindu state on India's religiously and ethnically diverse populace. (My grandfather's killer also belonged to this group.) The writings of the organization's ideologues, their sustained majoritarian and anti-minority rhetoric, and the policy positions of the outfit's political wing (the party currently governing India) have made this amply clear. Moreover, the entity and its offshoots have been implicated in mass violence against minorities over the years.

The group has spawned a closely knit mesh of organizations. This grassroots network has always been against my grandfather's philosophy.

Modi's views on minorities, secularism, and pluralism have been largely shaped by the RSS, whose ideology he has openly endorsed. Modi has proudly stated: "I got the inspiration to live for the nation from the RSS. ... I owe it all to the RSS." Since Modi's party has come to power, it has engaged in cynical posturing: praising Gandhi in public, while simultaneously seeking to demolish everything he stood for.

It is not surprising that minorities in India now feel a rapidly shrinking space for religious freedom. Hate campaigns against minorities include bizarre theories of Muslim youth luring Hindu girls as a form of "love jihad." A number of churches have been attacked in and around the country's capital. There have been group conversions under duress of minorities to Hinduism, an affront to India's secular Constitution. It is a measure of the sheer audacity of Hindu sectarian outfits that they are actively seeking funds to convert Muslims and Christians to Hinduism. And there have been incendiary statements by ruling party officials. A cabinet member, for instance, used expletives to refer to minorities.

Mahatma Gandhi once said the quality of democracy should be judged from the way minorities are treated. On the 67th anniversary of his assassination, I shudder to think of what lies ahead for India's minorities. The land the Mahatma fought so hard to free from British colonialists is now hostage to a divisive and hateful ideology.

5 tips to take control of your credit destiny

By TERRY SAVAGE
Tribune News Service

Terry Savage is a Registered Investment Advisor, blogger and the author of four best-selling books, including The Savage Truth on Money*. Terry responds to question on her blog at TerrySavage.com.*

Your credit report, and the credit score partly derived from your credit report, are the basic building blocks of your financial life. The three major credit bureaus—Experian, TransUnion and Equifax—collect every bit of data they can find about your use of credit: mortgage payments, credit cards, car loans. Your credit report impacts everything from the cost of car insurance to the interest rate you will pay on your mortgage. Here are five key things to know about your credit:

1. Your Credit Report. You are entitled to a free look at your credit report from each of the three bureaus, once a year. They should basically be the same, but it's worth checking all three. Past use of credit (or misuse) stays on your report for seven years. (A chapter 7 bankruptcy stays on your report for 10 years, and a chapter 13 bankruptcy for seven years.) You have a right to dispute errors. The best place to get your report is at the government-mandated FREE site: www.AnnualCreditReport.com., where you do not have to sign up for credit monitoring to get your report.

2. Your Credit Score. Your credit score is derived from your credit report—but includes a weighting for several factors, only some of which are under your control. Length of time at your residence and length of credit history are part of the score. But even more important are your bill payment habits—whether you always pay on time—and the amount of credit outstanding, along with the percentage of available credit you are using.

Credit scores range from 300 to 850. There are many credit scores, but the most popular is the FICO score. If you want to know more, go to MyFico.com, where the score costs $4.95—or you can get a free FICO score on your Discover or Bank of America credit card bill. You can get a free Vantage credit score instantly at www.CreditKarma.com.

3. Starting a Credit History. If you access your credit report and realize that you don't have a credit history, it's easy to get started. You need a "secured card"—a card that limits your spending to a deposit you make into a savings account at the card-issuing bank. You'll receive a regular Visa or Mastercard, which you can use at any location to make purchases or withdraw cash—up to your limit. Start charging a few items a month, and be sure to pay in full and on time. The issuer will report your spending and payment habits to the credit bureaus. For a list of secured cards, go to www.Bankrate.com. [http://www.bankrate.com/credit-cards/secured-cards.aspx]

4. Paying Down Outstanding Balances. It's easy to get into credit card trouble if you make only minimum monthly payments required by your bill. That could result in paying interest that is as much as four times the amount you originally charged—over a period that could extend as long as 30 years! If you already have a balance you're trying to pay down, try this simple trick: Double the current minimum monthly payment, and pay that same amount every month (even as the required minimum drops). Don't charge another penny on the card. Your balance will be paid off in less than three years!

5. Getting Credit Help. Many organizations offer credit and/or bankruptcy counseling. But be wary of those that want you to stop paying your current amounts, pay them a fee, and set aside money to offer a "settlement." These typically result in ruining your credit even more. Instead, contact the National Foundation for Credit Counseling at 800-388-2227 or www.NFCC.org. Or search at the non-profit Association for Independent Consumer Credit Counseling Agencies at www.aiccca.org to search for an accredited agency near you. You can get trusted free or very low-cost counseling in person or over the phone.

Your credit is an important part of your financial future. Use your credit wisely, check it at least annually, and protect it carefully. Then it will be an asset instead of a liability. That's The Savage Truth.

The terrible downside of helicopter parenting

By ANNE MICHAUD
Newsday

Anne Michaud is interactive editor for Newsday Opinion *and a member of the* Newsday *editorial board. Readers may send her email at anne.michaud@newsday.com.*

The story about a brother and sister, ages 10 and 6, who were stopped by police on their walk home from a park in suburban Maryland raises doubts about how much protection modern-day kids need. The children had permission from their parents to walk the 1 mile home. But Maryland local police insisted on giving them a ride and obviously perceived the terrain as dangerous.

By the time the 10-year-old got home, he was in tears worrying if his dad would be arrested. Instead, the parents are being investigated by county child services officials for neglect.

My heart goes out to parents Alexander and Danielle Meitiv. They told interviewers that they wanted to give their kids increasing responsibility, step by step. But Child Protective Services is demanding a "safety plan" pledge from the Meitivs, or they risk losing custody of their children.

Since when did our paternal government decide to substitute his judgment for that of parents? The nanny state has spun out of control.

Kids should be pushed as far as they will go, as soon as they are ready. In the aviary, I would be the mom shoving her chicks from the nest. That's how they experience risk-taking, freedom and danger—all while they're young enough to have their parents around to catch them, give them a hug and advise a brush-yourself-off better set of choices. Soon enough, the kids will be required to fly on their own without us close by.

I would have been a more protective mother if I hadn't married someone who liked jumping out of airplanes. One afternoon when my husband was throwing our younger daughter into the air and catching her, a friend pulled me aside to warn that experts say that tossing kids can cause brain damage—even if it's all for fun. We had our two daughters swimming as infants, skiing at 3, and taking a flight together to Ohio, without their parents, when they were 11 and 13. They lost their boarding passes during the layover but successfully sought help from an airport security guard. "Face your fears" is a family motto.

Like my overprotective friend, those police officers and social workers in Maryland aren't unusual. They mirror our society's view that childhood is too precious to entrust to children. Our 24-7 news cycle magnifies dangers. Today we are more sensitive to children's psychological well-being—a wonderful development, up to a point.

But when we constantly remind children to consider the worst-case outcome—an abduction, a molestation—we make them fearful and anxious. We say we want them to grow up to be risk-takers, but then don't allow them to experience risk. We want them to be creative and listen to their unique inner voices, without allowing "the small adventures, the secret journeys, the setbacks and mishaps, the glorious anarchy, the moments of solitude and even of boredom" that made up our childhoods, in the words of Carl Honore, author of the 2009 book "Under Pressure: Rescuing Childhood from the Culture of Hyper-Parenting."

Protective anxiety has risen to such a pitch that the Discovery Life Channel last week began a 13-part series called "World's Worst Mom," in which a coach trains parents to learn to let go. The coach is "Free Range Kids" author Lenore Skenazy, who allowed her 9-year-old son to ride the New York City subway alone and wrote about it. I wouldn't have gone that far with my kids, but each child is different.

When parents—not to mention police and child services agents—are overanxious, they convey to their kids the message, I don't trust you to be competent. Worse, we teach children to doubt themselves—and we risk raising a nation of people who substitute a paternal government's judgments for their own.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Re: CNMI healthcare reform

Over the years I have learned to put more trust in what a man does more than what people say or even what a person says they will do. Dr. Walker, thank you for taking care of former representative Ana Teregeyo. We are glad she got the care she needed. With regard to helping people on Tinian and Rota and many of your other healthcare suggestions, there could be nothing in these ideas for you other than your willingness to help us. You have our family's respect.

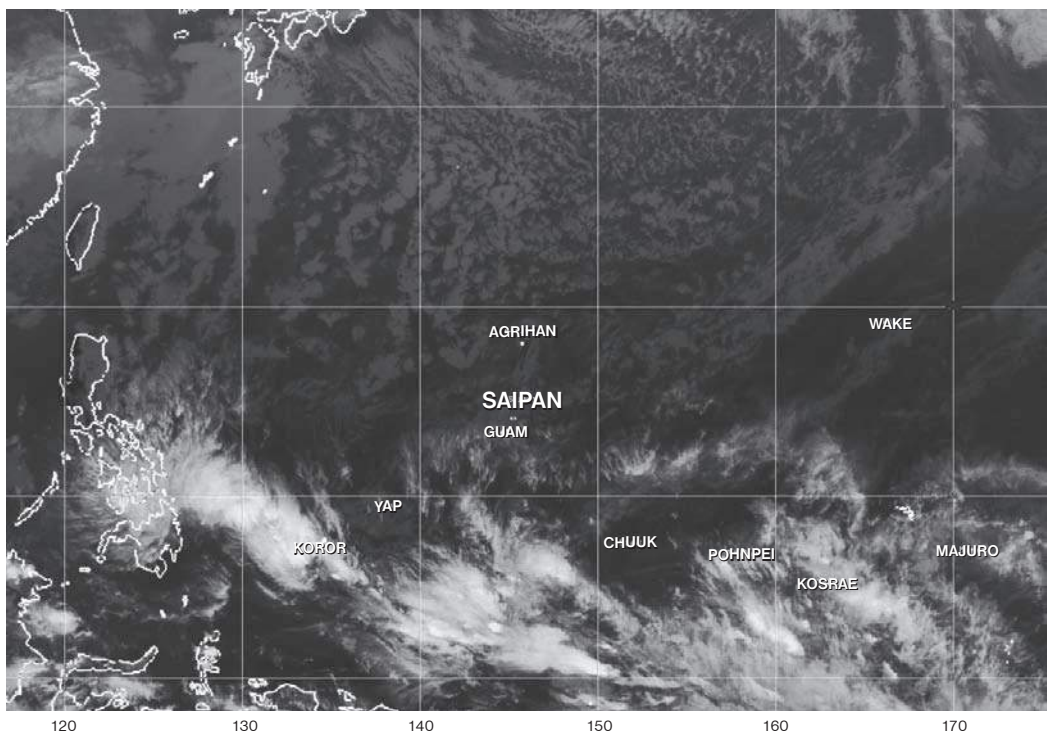
Mary Tomokane
via email

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲86º ▼75º	▲87º ▼76º	▲87º ▼76º	▲87º ▼76º	▲86º ▼76º

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2015
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A near equatorial trough extends across much of Micronesia from 2N130E to 2N155E through a circulation near 2N166E to end near EQ171E. Low-level convergence along and north of the trough axis is producing a few areas of scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms. The first area is over Palau within 100 miles of a line that extends from 10N130E to 5N138E.The second area is southwest and south of Chuuk between the equator and 7N from 140E to 150E and between the equator and 2N from 150E to 157E. The third area is over Kosrae within 100 miles of a line that extends from 7N160E to 1N170E. A cold front extends from the dateline and 24N to 18N166E just south of Wake Island, then continues as a shear line to 9N150E. Low clouds and showers can be found along and up to 100 miles north of the boundary. Another cold front enters the discussion area north of Wake Island near 25N165E to 17N150E and continues as a shear line through the Marianas to end near 12N140E. Low clouds and showers can be found along and up to 100 miles north of the boundary.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

Micronesia

Guam And Rota	Partly Cloudy	▲82	▼75
Palau	Showers	▲86	▼77
Yap	Showers	▲85	▼76
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼77
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼79
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	▲83	▼78
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼79

Around the Globe

Auckland	Partly Cloudy	▲81	▼63
Beijing	Sunny	▲49	▼25
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	▲69	▼58
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲81	▼71
London	Parltly Cloudy	▲39	▼31
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	▲76	▼54
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲83	▼67
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	▲73	▼58
Miami	Thundershowers	▲84	▼59
New York	Ice	▲38	▼14
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	▲47	▼34
Paris	Snow	▲39	▼31
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲51	▼33
Rome	Sunny	▲54	▼40
Salem	Showers	▲54	▼44
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲68	▼51
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	▲44	▼27
Tokyo	Sunny	▲49	▼31
Washington, DC	Showers	▲52	▼22

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Tides

Saipan Harbor

1:32 AM	Today	Low Tide:	-0.2 Feet
8:20 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
1:55 PM	Today	Low Tide:	1.0 Feet
6:54 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:46 AM	6:17 PM
Wednesday	6:46 AM	6:17 PM
Thursday	6:46 AM	6:17 PM
Friday	6:45 AM	6:18 PM
Saturday	6:45 AM	6:18 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	5:43 AM	5:52 AM
Wednesday	6:31 AM	6:35 AM
Thursday	7:19 PM	7:16 AM
Friday	8:06 PM	7:55 AM
Saturday	8:52 PM	8:33 AM

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 5, 2015

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA5070	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA5068	8:00am	8:50am	3
UA5068	8:40am	9:30am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA5039	2:20pm	4:00pm	6, 7 via Rota
UA5078	3:10pm	4:00pm	1, 5
UA5038	3:10pm	4:00pm	2, 4
UA5040	6:55pm	7:45pm	1, 5
UA5078	8:35pm	9:25pm	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA5044	10:40pm	11:30pm	1, 5

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA5039	2:20pm	2:55pm	6, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA5039	3:25pm	4:00pm	6, 7

SAIPAN-PALAU (ROR)

DL287	6:05am	1:10am+1	2, 6 via NRT

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL287	6:05am	8:40am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6
DL297	4:20pm	7:05pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ6063	3:20am	7:10am	3, 4, 6, 7
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
7C 3401	4:30pm	8:20pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:00am	8:35am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	5:30am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:30am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5069/PR111	2:45am	4:50pm	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5070/191	4:15am	7:20am	2, 7 via GUM
UA5070/191	4:15am	9:00am	3, 6 via GUM
UA5070/183	4:15am	8:45pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA5070/183	4:15am	9:10pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
DL287/275	6:05am	9:35pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 6 via NRT
UA5071/PR111	6:40am	4:50pm	3 via GUM
UA5071/PR111	7:15am	4:50pm	1, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:00am	9:50pm	3 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:40am	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:40am	9:50pm	1, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5039/183	2:20pm	9:50pm	6, 7 via Rota-GUM
UA5038/183	3:10pm	9:30pm	2 via GUM
UA5078/183	3:10pm	9:30pm	5 via GUM
UA5078/183	3:10pm	9:50pm	1 via GUM
UA5038/183	3:10pm	9:50pm	4 via GUM
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

OZ606/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ606/723	2:10am	12:50pm	1 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/723	2:40am	12:50pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5070/179	4:15am	10:35pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA5068/179	8:00am	10:35pm	3 via GUM
UA5068/179	8:40am	10:35pm	1, 5, 6 via GUM
UA5039/179	2:20pm	10:35pm	6 via Rota-GUM
UA5078/179	3:10pm	10:35pm	1, 5 via GUM
OZ604/749	3:20pm	10:30pm	Daily via ICN

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA5069	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA5071	6:40am	7:30am	3
UA5071	7:15am	8:05am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA5039	1:00pm	1:50pm	6, 7
UA5038	1:10pm	2:40pm	2, 4 via Rota
UA5077	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 5
UA5041	5:35pm	6:25pm	1, 5
UA5077	7:15pm	8:05pm	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA5043	9:20pm	10:10pm	1, 5

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA5038	1:00pm	1:35pm	2, 4

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA5038	2:05pm	2:40pm	2, 4

PALAU (ROR)-SAIPAN

DL298	4:35am	3:00pm	3, 7 via NRT

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL288	8:55pm	1:25am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
7C 3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
OZ6053	8:50pm	2:10am+1	2, 3, 5, 6

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:30pm	4:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:30pm	12:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:55pm	3:10am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
PR110/UA5041	7:35am	6:25pm	1,5 via GUM
PR110/UA5077	7:35am	8:05pm	3, 6, 7 via GUM
PR110/UA5043	7:35am	10:10pm	1, 5 via GUM
DL172/288	9:40am	1:25am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 7 via NRT
UA190/5077	9:55am	8:05pm	2, 7 via GUM
UA190/5077	10:00am	8:05pm	3, 6 via GUM
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA184/5071	10:55pm	7:30am+1	3 via GUM
UA184/5071	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5039	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5038	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	4 via GUM-Rota
UA184/5077	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5041	10:55pm	6:25pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5077	10:55pm	8:05pm+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5043	10:55pm	10:10pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5071	10:59pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/5038	10:59pm	2:40pm+1	2 via GUM-Rota
UA184/5077	10:59pm	2:40pm+1	5 via GUM
UA184/5041	10:59pm	6:25pm+1	5 via GUM
UA184/5077	10:59pm	8:05pm+1	2 via GUM
UA184/5043	10:59pm	10:10pm+1	5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ746/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ750/603	1:10am	2:20pm	Daiily via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ724/605	2:20pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ724/605	2:20pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA180/5071	10:55pm	7:30am+1	3 via GUM
UA180/5071	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 5, 6 via GUM
UA180/5039	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	6 via GUM
UA180/5077	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	1, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA180/5041	10:55pm	6:25pm+1	1, 5 via GUM
UA180/5077	10:55pm	8:05pm+1	3, 6 via GUM
UA180/5043	10:55pm	10:10pm+1	1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; 7C: Jeju AirETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Mon, Tue,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
12:30NN	12:45NN	Daily
1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
12:00NN	12:15NN	Daily
1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:45AM	8:15AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:00PM	4:30PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:45PM	5:15PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

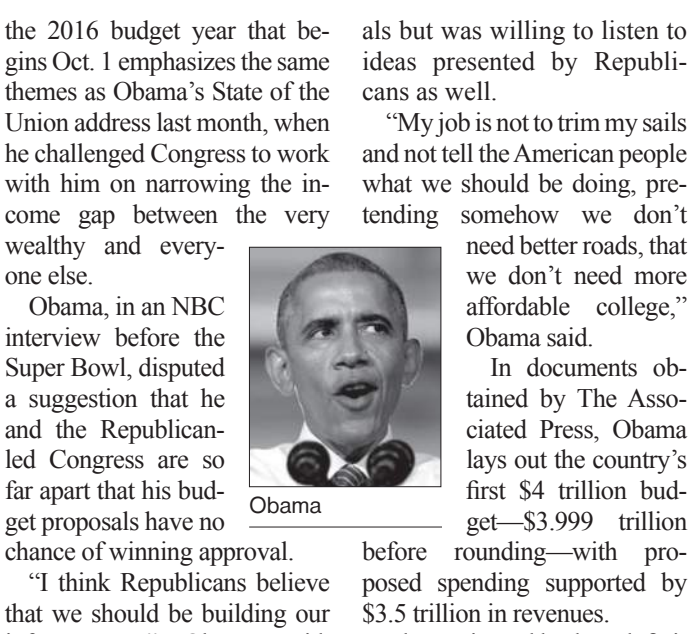
Business

Obama proposing $478 billion public works program in budget

WASHINGTON (AP)—The $4 trillion budget that President Barack Obama sends Congress on Monday proposes higher taxes on wealthier Americans and corporations, and an ambitious $478 billion public works program for highway, bridge and transit upgrades.

The grab-bag of proposals, many recycled from past Obama budgets, already is generating fierce objections from Republicans, who control both chambers of Congress for the first time in his presidency. They will move ahead on their own, mindful they eventually must strike a deal with Obama, whose signature is needed for the budget to become law.

The spending blueprint for the 2016 budget year that begins Oct. 1 emphasizes the same themes as Obama's State of the Union address last month, when he challenged Congress to work with him on narrowing the income gap between the very wealthy and everyone else.


Federal budget deadlines
Here's a look at some of the upcoming fiscal deadlines for the 114th Congress.
January
February
March
April
Feb. 27: Funding for Homeland Security expires
March 16: Resolution lifting the debt ceiling expires
March 31: Temporary "doc fix" funding Medicare expires
May
June
July
August
May 31: Bill funding the Highway Trust Fund expires
Oct. 1: Beginning of 2016 fiscal year; end of 2015 budget and return of automatic spending cuts (sequestration)
September
October
November
December
Dec. 31: Deadline to retroactively renew expiring tax provisions (tax extenders)

Graphic: Tribune News Service
Source: Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget

Obama, in an NBC interview before the Super Bowl, disputed a suggestion that he and the Republican-led Congress are so far apart that his budget proposals have no chance of winning approval.

Obama

"I think Republicans believe that we should be building our infrastructure," Obama said. "The question is how do we pay for it? That's a negotiation we should have."

The president said he was putting forward good proposals but was willing to listen to ideas presented by Republicans as well.

"My job is not to trim my sails and not tell the American people what we should be doing, pretending somehow we don't need better roads, that we don't need more affordable college," Obama said.

In documents obtained by The Associated Press, Obama lays out the country's first $4 trillion budget—$3.999 trillion before rounding—with proposed spending supported by $3.5 trillion in revenues.

The projected budget deficit would be $474 billion, slightly higher than the $467 billion forecast by the Congressional Budget Office for 2016. For the budget year that ended Sept. 30, the actual deficit was $483 billion. That was a marked improvement from the $1 trillion-plus deficits during Obama's first years in office, when the country was struggling to emerge from a deep recession.

The CBO sees the deficits rising for the rest of the decade, once again topping $1 trillion by 2025 as spending surges in the government's big benefit programs with the retirement of millions of baby boomers. Obama's budget projects a $687 billion deficit in 2025, though its forecast of economic growth would keep deficits at a manageable percentage of the gross domestic product.

Obama's budget does not make major changes in politically popular programs such as Social Security and Medicare. Republicans are promising action in their budget plans.

Obama's six-year $478 billion public works program would provide upgrades for the nation's highways, bridges and transit systems, in an effort to tap into bipartisan support for spending on badly needed repairs.

SIDEBAR

Some highlights of proposals in Obama's new spending plan

Highlights of proposals in the $4 trillion budget for 2016 that President Barack Obama sends to Congress on Monday:

■ A six-year, $478 billion public works program for highway, bridge and transit upgrades. About $238 billion would come from a one-time 14 percent mandatory tax on the up to $2 trillion in estimated U.S. corporate earnings that have accumulated overseas. That rate is significantly lower than the current top corporate rate of 35 percent. The top corporate rate for U.S. earnings would drop to 28 percent; foreign profits would be taxed at 19 percent, with companies getting a credit for foreign taxes paid. The remaining $240 billion would come from the federal Highway Trust Fund, which is financed with a gasoline tax.

■ Increasing the capital gains rate on couples making more than $500,000 per year, from 23.8 percent to 28 percent. Obama wants to require estates to pay capital gains taxes on securities at the time they are inherited. He is trying to impose a 0.07 percent fee on the roughly 100 U.S. financial companies with assets of more than $50 billion.

■ Obama would take the $320 billion that those tax increases would generate over 10 years and funnel them into low- and middle-class tax breaks. His ideas: a credit of up to $500 for two-income families, a boost in the child care tax credit to up to $3,000 per child under age 5, and overhauling breaks that help pay for college.

■ Easing painful, automatic cuts to the Pentagon and domestic agencies with a 7 percent increase in annual appropriations. For 2016, he wants a $38 billion increase for the Pentagon.

■ The projected budget deficit would be $474 billion, slightly higher than the $467 billion forecast by the Congressional Budget Office for 2016. For the budget year that ended Sept. 30, the actual deficit was $483 billion. That was a marked improvement from the $1 trillion-plus deficits during Obama's first years in office, when the country was struggling to emerge from a deep recession.

Focus on yourself, not promoted co-worker

YOUR OFFICE COACH

By MARIE G. MCINTYRE
Tribune News Service

Marie G. McIntyre is a workplace coach and the author of "Secrets to Winning at Office Politics."

Q: I was recently passed over for promotion for the second time. As a senior nurse, I have often filled in for our supervisor, so I have experience in that role. However, now that I've been turned down twice, it seems clear that I am never going to get a supervisory position.

What I am struggling to understand is why an unqualified coworker was chosen for this job. "Callie" not only has less experience, but also treats colleagues disrespectfully and generally has a negative attitude. Several other nurses have expressed disappointment that she is becoming our supervisor.

I also have concerns about the selection process. Callie had several peer interviews, but none of them included anyone who might oppose her. Our manager was aware of the complaints about Callie, but apparently decided to ignore them. Should I raise questions about how this was handled?

A: The key consideration is whether anything would be gained by sharing your concerns. If there were any hope of reversing the outcome, then it might be worth exploring how this decision was made. But if Callie's promotion is a done deal, your protest could easily backfire and do more harm than good.

In terms of your career, the real issue is not why they chose Callie, but why they didn't choose you. If the higher-ups feel you are not management material, you certainly deserve to know why. So instead of focusing on Callie's shortcomings, ask what you could to increase your own chances of promotion. Once you understand how you are currently viewed, perhaps you will be able to reshape those perceptions.

Q: After six years in prison, my son Bart is about to be released. I'm concerned that his incarceration may make it harder for him to find a job. Now that almost all applications are online, what can he do to encourage someone to contact him?

A: First, like all applicants, Bart must learn how to conduct an effective job search. Looking for work requires a specific set of abilities, including resume writing, networking and interviewing. Mastering these skills will help him overcome the inevitable obstacles created by his prison record.

Submitting online applications is fine, as long as that's not all he does. While personal networking is recommended for everyone, it is especially important for applicants who have red flags in their background. A referral from someone who can vouch for Bart's character will go a long way towards helping him land a job.

Towards that end, Bart should seek out activities which could provide him with references. Athletic clubs, church groups and civic organizations can all help to build his contact list. Any type of work, paid or unpaid, will also strengthen his resume. Volunteer assignments are fine, but a temporary or part-time job would be even better.

Finally, your son should take advantage of any employment-related programs available to former inmates, because they will be tailored to his specific circumstances. All this may sound like a lot of work, but the most successful applicants are those who approach their job search as a job.

Officials meet to address safety after aviation calamities

WASHINGTON (AP)—Government and aviation industry officials from dozens of countries are meeting in Montreal this week to try to find consensus on how to keep from losing airliners like the one that vanished without a trace in Asia and another shot down in Eastern Europe.

It is only the second high-level safety conference in the 70-year history of the International Civil Aviation Organization, a U.N. agency, but last year was calamitous. A Malaysia Airlines flight disappeared in March and has not been found. In July, another Malaysia Airlines flight was down shot down while flying over an area of Ukraine where ethnic Russian rebels are trying to secede.

There is broad agreement that the agency should build a database where governments can send intelligence or warnings about risks to aircraft flying over conflict zones. Historically, though, nations other than the United States rarely have posted public warnings about such risks in other countries. Few have global intelligence networks, and it has been considered almost impolite for one country to issue a warning about another. Instead, the practice has been for each country to issue warnings only about its own airspace.

But that is changing.

ICAO, the U.N. agency, sent an urgent warning to members on Jan. 14 that airlines flying over Libya risk being shot down. On Jan. 22, the European Aviation Safety Agency distributed a French warning that flights over Pakistan might be subject to "terrorist attacks."

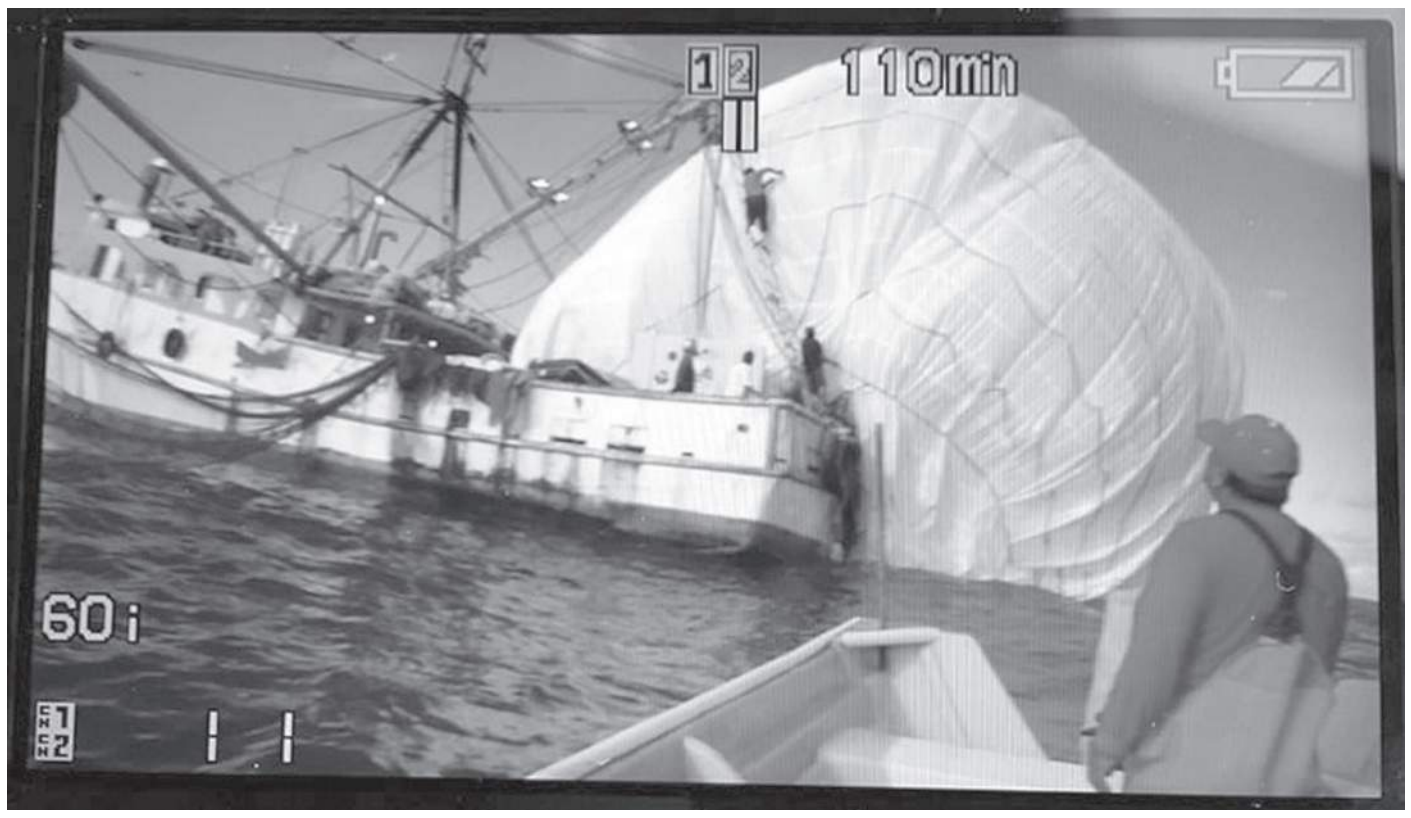
Ukraine had warned airlines flying over its territory to remain above 32,000 feet. The Malaysia plane, however, was flying at about 33,000 feet from the Netherlands to Kuala Lumpur, the Malaysian capital, when it was fired upon.

A majority of the 298 people aboard were Dutch citizens. The Netherlands wants airlines to tell passengers before takeoff whether a plane's flight path will cross a conflict zone. Airlines and other nations say that goes too far.

While sympathetic to the Dutch concerns, "we're also confident that an ICAO centralized database represents a reasonable balance," said Kenneth Quinn, former general counsel at the Federal Aviation Administration.

Nation

Balloon pilots arrive in New Mexico after historic flight



AP
This image from video shows the recovery boatS collecting the balloon envelope 4 miles offshore in Baja California about 300 miles north of the popular beach destination of Cabo San Lucas Saturday Jan. 31, 2015.

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP)—Two pilots who completed a record-breaking flight across the Pacific Ocean in a helium-filled balloon returned to New Mexico on Sunday to the sounds of mariachi music and an enthusiastic and emotional welcome

A large crowd greeted Troy Bradley of Albuquerque and Leonid Tiukhtyaev of Russia at the Albuquerque International Sunport after they finished the historic journey a day earlier. The news conference was adorned with colorful balloon decorations to mark the occasion, and the event included a champagne toast.

Bradley had been planning the trans-Pacific flight for 15 years, and his wife said he was driven by a goal of doing something better than anyone else in the world.

"Our flight was absolutely amazing," Bradley told reporters and supporters.

The accomplished Albuquerque pilot had set his sights long ago on flying farther and longer in a gas balloon than anyone in history. He and Tiukhtyaev staked their claim to those records during a nearly seven-day trip across the Pacific Ocean in a helium-filled balloon.

Their adventure ended just after sunrise Saturday when they touched down in the water a few miles off the coast of Mexico's Baja California, and about 300 miles north of the popular beach destination of Cabo San Lucas.

Initial plans called for a picture-perfect landing on the beach, but winds pushing parallel to the coast forced the pilots to drop their trailing ropes into the ocean to help slow the balloon for a controlled water landing.

"That was the hardest part of the trip," Bradley said.

Hundreds of miles away at mission control in Albuquerque, cheers erupted and the cork was popped on a bottle of champagne. The team declared success once they knew the pilots had been picked up by a fishing boat. Mexican authorities helped to secure the balloon and capsule along with all the equipment aboard that was used to document the historic flight.

Back in Albuquerque on Sunday, another cork was popped on a bottle of champagne, this time with the two pilots and Albuquerque Mayor Richard Berry, who traveled to Mexico to personally meet the record-breakers.

"They helped put Albuquerque on the map," Berry said.

Bradley and Tiukhtyaev lifted off from Japan last Sunday. By Friday, they beat what's considered the "holy grail" of ballooning achievements, the 137-hour duration record set in 1978 by the Double Eagle crew of Ben Abruzzo, Maxie Anderson and Larry Newman in the first balloon flight across the Atlantic. They also easily exceeded the distance record of 5,209 miles set by the Double Eagle V team during the first trans-Pacific flight in 1981.

Baby boy born on roadside as mom drives herself to hospital

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—A pregnant Utah woman driving herself to the hospital gave birth to a healthy, nearly 10-pound baby boy on the side of an interstate highway, police said.

Devi Mariah Ostler's labor started Saturday before she got in the car, but soon became overwhelming and she called 911, Utah Highway Patrol Trooper Jalaine Hawkes said.

On a recording of the call, Ostler is initially calm, telling the dispatcher that she's on the freeway, but soon interrupts herself to say her water broke.

"I'm trying to get over into the other lane—I need to push!" she said. She told the dispatcher her name and described her car, then said: "The baby is coming!"

The 32-year-old expectant mother pulled over on the side of Interstate 15 as dispatcher Brittney Chugg talked her through the labor, telling her to lay her seat back, breathe and even hold the baby's head so he wasn't born too fast.

"We knew. We just knew it was going to happen. There was going to be a baby on the side of the freeway right then," said Chugg at a news conference Sunday, according to the Deseret News.

Police Chief Jean Loveland from the nearby town of Willard and Utah Highway Patrol trooper Josh Carr sped to the spot. Less than a minute after their arrival, she gave birth to a 9.9-pound baby boy. Cars can be heard speeding by on the recording as the baby is born and wrapped in a sweat shirt.

"He came right out in my hands," said Carr, who told her the gender of the baby for the first time. "It was very emotional. Probably next to my own children's' birth, it was a very satisfying moment in my career."

He is her third child.

Ostler, of Mantua, said the contractions started as she was driving her 6-year-old son at her mother's house, and when they didn't stop she started driving herself to the hospital.

"I knew the baby was coming and it doesn't help to panic. So, I just stayed calm and said, `Well, if I deliver it on my own then I deliver it on my own. If somebody gets here, somebody gets here. The baby is here. There's not much more I can do about it,'" she said Sunday.

She had not picked a name for the baby as of Sunday.

The mother and baby were taken in good condition to the hospital in Brigham City, about 60 miles north of Salt Lake City.

"Everyone is really feeling good," Hawkes said. The baby was due on Tuesday.

Roadside births happen occasionally in the state, especially in rural areas where it's harder to get to a hospital quickly, Hawkes said.

Marathon bombing defense likely to focus on dead brother

BOSTON (AP)—The best chance to save the life of Boston Marathon bombing suspect Dzhokhar Tsarnaev might be to put his dead brother on trial.

When Tsarnaev's case begins, his lawyers are likely to pin their hopes—and the bombings themselves—on his older brother, Tamerlan: a Golden Gloves boxer, college student, husband and father who also followed radical Islam was named by a friend as a participant in a grisly 2011 triple slaying.

"He was the eldest one and he, in many ways, was the role model for his sisters and his brother," said Elmirza Khozhugov, the former husband of Tamerlan's sister, Ailina.

"You could always hear his younger brother and sisters say, `Tamerlan said this,' and `Tamerlan said that.' Dzhokhar loved him. He would do whatever Tamerlan would say," Khozhugov told The Associated Press in the weeks after the bombings.

Three people were killed and more than 260 were injured when two homemade pressure-cooker bombs exploded near the finish line of the iconic race on April 15, 2013.

Tamerlan Tsarnaev, 26, died days after the bombings following a gun battle with police. Dzhokhar, then 19, was later found hiding in a boat parked in a backyard. Jury selection in his federal death penalty trial is entering its second month. With a snow storm in the forecast, proceedings Monday were canceled and jury selection was to resume Tuesday.

Dzhokhar's lawyers have made it clear they will try to show that he was heavily influenced, maybe even intimidated, by his older brother, into participating in the bombings.

If a jury convicts Dzhokhar, its decision on whether to give him life in prison or sentence him to death could depend "on the extent to which it views Tamerlan Tsarnaev as having induced or coerced his young brother" to help commit the crimes, the defense argued in a court filing.

New spy case shows Russia up to old tricks, prosecutors say

NEW YORK (AP)—Three men accused in the latest Russian spy case didn't hide behind fake identities and weren't stealing military secrets. The evidence even suggests they were annoyed that their assignment wasn't more like a James Bond film.

Their alleged plot to dig up "economic intelligence" on possible banking penalties and alternative energy sources may not be the stuff of Hollywood movies, but U.S. authorities insist the case is proof that Russian spying is thriving in America more than two decades after the end of the Cold War.

It also shows the time and resources the U.S. still throws at those suspected of being Putin-era spies, using methods developed before many of them were born: listening bugs, hidden cameras and intercepted phone calls.

"Russian spies continue to seek to operate in our midst," U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara warned after the arrests last week. Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman Alexander Lukashevich countered by accusing U.S. authorities of manufacturing a spy scandal as part of its "anti-Russian campaign."

Annemarie McAvoy, a Fordham Law professor and former federal prosecutor, said the latest case shouldn't be taken lightly.

"We have to be concerned about the economic warfare end of this. That's what worries me," she said, noting the recent crippling cyberattack on Sony Pictures involving the movie "The Interview."

She said the arrests might demonstrate that the spy game has changed as countries seek information to poise themselves to attack businesses and the economy. "It's not looking for military secrets. That's almost passe now," McAvoy said.

The case against Evgeny Buryakov, Igor Sporyshev and Victor Podobnyy comes less than five years after the arrest of 10 covert agents—a sleeper cell referred to as "The Illegals" by the SVR, the foreign intelligence agency headquartered in Moscow—who led ordinary lives for several years in the United States using aliases. All 10 pleaded guilty in federal court in Manhattan to conspiracy charges and were ordered out of the country as part of a spy swap for four people convicted of betraying Moscow to the West.

Federal prosecutors in Brooklyn brought another spy case in 2013, accusing Alexander Fishenko, a naturalized U.S. citizen from Kazakhstan who made millions off his Texas export firm, of being a secret agent for the Russian military. Fishenko, who pleaded not guilty, is scheduled to go to trial later this year.

Not everyone views the latest case as a scary new wrinkle in spy tactics.

"What is interesting about this case, just like the 2010 sleeper spy case, is how little these accused Russian spies are accomplishing. Either the FBI is just getting the low-hanging fruit, or the Russian foreign intelligence agency isn't doing its job very well," said Kimberly Marten, a political scientist at Barnard College, Columbia University.

Asia

Wife of slain Japanese hostage expresses grief and pride

TOKYO (AP)—The wife of slain Japanese hostage Kenji Goto said Monday that she was devastated but proud of her husband, who was beheaded by Islamic State extremists.

In a statement issued through the British-based journalist group Rory Peck Trust, Rinko Jogo requested privacy for her family as they deal with their loss, and thanked those who had supported them.

"I remain extremely proud of my husband, who reported the plight of people in conflict areas like Iraq, Somalia and Syria," she said.

"It was his passion to highlight the effects on ordinary people, especially through the eyes of children, and to inform the rest of us of the tragedies of war," she said.

Goto left for Syria in late October just a few weeks after the birth of the couple's youngest daughter. Soon after, he was captured by the militants.

Appalled and saddened by news of Goto's death following the release of a video showing his killing, purportedly by the Islamic State group, Japan has ordered heightened security precautions at airports and at Japanese facilities overseas, such as embassies and schools.

The government also has called on all journalists and others in areas near the conflict to withdraw, given the risk of further kidnappings or other threats.

Until now, Japan had not become directly embroiled in the fight against the militants.

In parliamentary debate Monday, opposition lawmakers challenged Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's effort to raise Japan's diplomatic profile through non-military support for countries fighting the Islamic State group, which control about a third of both Syria and Iraq.

AP

Junko Ishido, mother of Japanese journalist Kenji Goto, speaks during a press conference at her home in Tokyo, Sunday, Feb. 1, 2015 after the release of an online video that purported to show an Islamic State group militant beheading her son.

Citing previous cases, including a 1995 sarin gas attack in Tokyo's subways, Abe said he did not see an increased terrorist risk following savage threats in the purported Islamic State group video, which vowed to target Japanese and make the knife Goto's killer was wielding Japan's "nightmare."

Japan will not be cowed by such threats, Abe said.

"The terrorists are criminals," he said. "We are determined to pursue them and hold them accountable."

Abe said Japan will persevere in providing humanitarian aid to countries fighting Islamic State extremists, saying that bowing to terrorist intimidation would prevent Japan from providing medical assistance and other aid it views as necessary for helping to restore stability in the region.

The failure to save Goto raised fears for the life of a Jordanian fighter pilot also held by the Islamic State militants.

Jordan renewed an offer Sunday to swap an al-Qaida prisoner for the pilot, Lt. Muath al-Kaseasbeh, who was seized after his F-16 crashed near the Islamic State group's de facto capital, Raqqa, Syria, in December.

Government spokesman Mohammed al-Momani told The Associated Press that "we are still ready to hand over" prisoner Sajida al-Rishawi, who faces death by hanging for her role in triple hotel bombings in Jordan in 2005. Al-Rishawi has close family ties to the Iraq branch of al-Qaida, a precursor of the Islamic State group.

With no updates for days, al-Kaseasbeh's family appealed to the government for information on his situation. But for Goto's family and friends, the beheading shattered any hopes for his rescue.

Jogo, Goto's wife, said she had received several emails from unknown people claiming to be her husband's captors. But the hostage crisis became a national issue after the militants issued a demand for $200 million in ransom, to be paid within 72 hours, on Jan. 20.

Later, the militants' demand shifted to seeking the release of al-Rishawi, who survived the 2005 attack that killed 60 people when her explosive belt failed to detonate in the worst terror attack in Jordan's history.

Jordan and Japan reportedly conducted indirect negotiations with the militants through Iraqi tribal leaders, but late on Friday the Japanese envoy sent to Amman to work on the hostage crisis reported a deadlock in those efforts.

1 hurt as small blasts rattle Bangkok mall shoppers

BANGKOK (AP)—Police in Thailand on Monday were investigating a pair of bombings outside a luxury shopping mall in the heart of Bangkok, the first such violence reported in the capital since last year's army coup.

One person was slightly injured in the blasts Sunday night, and police said the small homemade bombs were designed to sow panic, not kill.

The explosions occurred about 8 p.m. between the upscale Paragon shopping mall and a mass transit elevated train line, which was undamaged but briefly shut as a precaution.

"The explosions were caused by two pipe bombs that were controlled by digital clocks. Inside the pipes were flash powder and some nails," said police Col. Kamthorn Auicharoen, who heads the explosive ordnance disposal team. He said a Thai man was injured in his left hand.

He said police were looking into issuing arrest warrants for two male suspects seen on closed-circuit television footage.

The incident came at a time of slightly raised political temperatures in Thailand, as the country's ruling junta has tightened its clampdown on critics of its rule. It came a little more than a week after the impeachment of former Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra.

Thailand has been under martial law since the army seized power in a May 22 coup that toppled her elected government.

Police initially said the explosions were caused by a malfunctioning transformer, but National Police spokesman Lt. Gen. Prawut Thawornsiri later said they were caused by devices that were probably not meant to hurt anyone. Service at the station was suspended for about an hour.

"We think the intent of the bombers was not to harm anyone but was rather to cause trouble and to damage the overall mood," Prawut told The Associated Press on Sunday night. "We have not assumed that it was politically motivated but we are pursuing a few motives in our investigation."

There has been little open opposition, and virtually no violent opposition, to the military regime that took over from an elected civilian government after a coup d'etat last May. Martial law remains in effect under the dual administration of the junta and a military-appointed interim Cabinet, and any dissent is strongly discouraged.

ASIAN BRIEFS

2 cult members executed in China for McDonald's murder

BEIJING (AP)—A father and daughter in China have been executed for attacking and killing a woman who had refused to join their illegal cult during an altercation at a McDonald's outlet, a Chinese court said Monday. Zhang Fan and her father, Zhang Lidong, were executed after the Supreme People's Court approved the death penalty, the Yantai Intermediate People's Court in the eastern province of Shandong said in a statement. It didn't say when the executions took place. The two were convicted and sentenced in October along with three other women, who received sentences from life imprisonment to seven years.

Suu Kyi's iron gate up for auction; minimum bid $200,000

YANGON, Myanmar (AP)—The iron gate that stood in front of the home of Myanmar's formerly imprisoned democracy icon, separating her from throngs of supporters as she made speeches challenging the country's then-military rulers, is going on the auction block. Soe Nyunt, the current owner, said Monday the starting bid will be $200,000. Proceeds will go toward helping Aung San Suu Kyi build a new National League for Democracy party headquarters. The Nobel-prize winner, now 69, permanently moved from London to the lakeside house of her mother almost 27 years ago.

Macau casino rev hit by China slowdown, corruption crackdown

HONG KONG (AP)—Casino revenues in Macau, the world's top global gambling market, fell for an eighth straight month in January as Chinese high-rollers were deterred by the country's economic slowdown and corruption crackdown.

Data posted Monday on the Macau gambling regulator's website showed that gross gambling revenue last month declined 17.4 percent from a year earlier to 23.7 billion patacas ($3 billion).

Annual revenue last year fell 2.6 percent to $44 billion. The decline came after a decade of supercharged growth that began when the former Portuguese colony ended a 40-year casino monopoly, opening the door to foreign operators.

Wealthy mainland Chinese patrons have powered Macau's casino growth but they started staying away last year as the economy sputtered and Beijing's massive corruption crackdown forced many to rein in lavish spending.

Macau, the only place in China where casinos are legal, now rakes in about seven times the revenue earned on the Las Vegas Strip.

The revenue decline comes as Macau faces the tough task of pivoting to a new model of growth, as dictated by Beijing. The authorities want to wean the city off growth dominated by so-called VIPs: wealthy patrons wagering staggering amounts on baccarat in private rooms brought over by junket agencies.

Instead, the focus is now on family-friendly resort developments to attract China's burgeoning middle class.

Junket operators are middlemen who facilitate travel and help clients get around China's capital controls by lending them money to gamble.

World

Egypt releases imprisoned Al-Jazeera reporter

CAIRO (AP)—A reporter for Al-Jazeera English was released from an Egyptian prison and deported Sunday after more than a year behind bars, but his two Egyptian colleagues remained jailed in a case widely condemned as a sham by human-rights groups.

Australian Peter Greste was whisked away on a flight to Cyprus. His release came as a welcome surprise to fellow reporters and activists who spent months pressing for his freedom.

But rights groups and Greste's Qatar-based broadcaster called on Egypt to release the other two defendants in the case, which has hindered the country's international standing as it struggles to recover from the political unrest and economic collapse caused by the 2011 uprising.

Greste, Egyptian-Canadian Mohammed Fahmy and Egyptian Baher Mohammed were arrested in December 2013 over their coverage of the violent crackdown on Islamist protests following the military overthrow of President Mohammed Morsi.

Egyptian authorities accused them of providing a platform for Morsi's Muslim Brotherhood, now declared a terrorist organization. But authorities provided no concrete evidence. The journalists and their supporters insist they were doing their jobs during a time of violent upheaval.

The three were widely seen as having been caught up in a regional power struggle between Egypt and Qatar, which funds Al-Jazeera and had been a strong backer of Morsi. Greste's release follows a thawing of ties between Cairo and Doha.

Greste was in a state of disbelief about his freedom and deeply relieved—but still worried about his imprisoned friends, said his brother, Andrew Greste.

"His excitement is tempered and restrained and will be until those guys are free," Andrew Greste said at the news conference in Brisbane. "He won't give up until Baher and Mohammed are out of there."

Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop, who had been negotiating for Greste's release, said Monday that the 49-year-old journalist had told her by telephone from Egypt that he was desperate to return to his family in the Australian city of Brisbane after spending 400 days in custody.

"He was immensely relieved and he was desperate to come home to Australia and reunite with his family," Bishop told reporters in Sydney. "From my discussion with him, he was very keen to be back on a beach and lying in the sun in Australia," she said.

AP
In this Saturday, May 3, 2014 file photo, Al-Jazeera's award-winning Australian correspondent Peter Greste, appears in a defendants' cage in a courthouse near Tora prison in Cairo, Egypt.

Greste had been given short notice that he was being released "unconditionally," Bishop said.

"We moved as fast as we could to make arrangements for his immediate departure," she said.

Australian Communications Minister Malcolm Turnbull credited the international pressure on Egypt as well as the personal lobbying of Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott for the outcome.

"It was a political decision to imprison him in the first place and a political decision to release him," Turnbull told reporters in Sydney.

"Clearly a lot of international influence and persuasion has been brought to bear, not just the Australian government," he added.

An Egyptian prison official and the nation's official news agency said Greste was released following a presidential "approval." The official and an Interior Ministry statement said he was released under a new deportation law passed last year. The law appeared to have been tailored to the Al-Jazeera case.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media. There was no word on the fate of the other two defendants.

Acting Al-Jazeera Director General Mostefa Souag said the Qatar-based network "will not rest until Baher and Mohamed also regain their freedom."

Hassiba Hadj Sahraoui, Amnesty International's deputy director for the Middle East and North Africa, welcomed the news of Greste's release but said "nothing can make up for his ordeal" and called for the others to be released.

"It is vital that in the celebratory fanfare surrounding his deportation the world does not forget the continuing ordeal" of his co-workers.

Canada also welcomed the "positive developments," saying it was hopeful that Fahmy's case would be "resolved shortly," according to a statement from the office of the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Consular.

Ukrainian separatist advance forces mass flight

SVYATOHIRSK, Ukraine (AP)—As fighting escalates around the town Debaltseve in eastern Ukraine, a growing wave of civilians are fleeing their homes, taking the risk of being struck by stray projectiles on their way, and often leaving family members behind.

Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk said that around 1,000 of Debaltseve's residents have been evacuated in the past days. Many end up at a government-owned holiday camp in the resort town of Svyatohirsk, where the sound of artillery fire is replaced with an uneasy quiet.

"With every slam of the door or whistle, we are reminded of the explosions and everything that happened. But we are getting used to the quiet, which is an unusual feeling," said Ira Akhmutova, 15, who left Debaltseve together with her mother and the few things they could carry.

"My dad and my grandmother are still in Debaltseve. Telephone connections are very poor and I am very worried about them," Akhmutova said.

Fighting has been most intense in the last week around the government-held town, a strategically valuable railway hub that has been almost entirely encircled by rebel forces. Only one road remains open for escape, and that has been targeted by artillery fire.

Ukraine's government said Sunday that 13 of its troops were killed and another 20 wounded in a day of fighting across the east.

Among those who left their homes to go to Svyatohirsk is Galina Maksimenko, 63, and one of her granddaughters.

After one episode of heavy shelling, she recalls pleading with her late son's wife to take her two daughters away from Debaltseve on a government bus for evacuees. The daughter-in-law refused, saying she wanted to remain near her husband's grave.

"I begged her, said to her: `You have to save the living. You cannot bring Andrei back. Escape with your children,'" Maksimenko said.

And still, the daughter-in-law refused to budge.

"So my husband grabbed my coat and that of one of my granddaughters and locked us out in the street. And then he shouted: `Save this one. If they refuse to be saved, at least try save one of them," Maksimenko said.

Jordan committed to anti-IS coalition, despite hostage drama

AMMAN, Jordan (AP)—Jordan remains "as committed as ever" to a U.S.-led military coalition against the Islamic State group, the kingdom's foreign minister said Sunday, amid heightened fears for the life of a Jordanian fighter pilot held by the militants.

Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh spoke a day after another Islamic State hostage, Japanese journalist Kenji Goto, was purportedly beheaded by the militants. The fate of the two captives had been linked but a video of Goto's purported slaying made no mention of the pilot.

The killing of 47-year-old Goto shocked Japan which until now had not been directly embroiled in the battle against extremists.

"I feel indignation over this immoral and heinous act of terrorism," said Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. In a phone call with Abe, Jordan's King Abdullah II condemned the killing as a "criminal act."

Japan responded to new threats from the militants by ordering tighter security at airports and at Japanese facilities overseas, including embassies and schools. Japan said it would not budge from its non-military support for fighting terrorism.

The failure to save Goto raised new concerns about the fate of the pilot, Lt. Muath al-Kaseasbeh. Jordan's government renewed an offer Sunday to trade Sajida al-Rishawi, an al-Qaida prisoner, for the pilot. Al-Rishawi, a failed suicide bomber, faces death by hanging in Jordan for her role in a 2005 hotel attack that killed 60 people.

The Islamic State group demanded her release last week, and in response Jordan offered to swap her for the pilot. But the militants didn't say at the time if they were considering such a deal.

An audio message last week, purportedly from the Islamic State group, only said the pilot would be killed if al-Rishawi was not released Thursday.

That deadline passed, with al-Rishawi remaining in custody, after Jordan said it cannot free her without proof that the pilot is alive.

Government spokesman Mohammed al-Momani said Sunday that "we are still ready to hand over" al-Rishawi in return for the pilot. However, Judeh, the foreign minister, said that "so far, we have seen no proof of life, which we have been asking for."

WORLD BRIEFS

Extremists attack biggest city in northeast Nigeria

MAIDUGURI, Nigeria (AP)—Nigerian troops Sunday repelled Islamic extremists who attacked from four fronts on Maiduguri, the biggest city in northeast Nigeria, with several civilians killed by aerial bombs and grenades and mortar shells on the ground. Soldiers said hundreds of insurgents died. Terrified residents fled homes shaking from five hours of heavy artillery fire and streamed in from the outskirts of the besieged city of 2 million, already crowded with another 200,000 refugees from the fighting. In a separate attack, a suspected Boko Haram suicide bomber killed himself and eight others Sunday at the home of politician Sabo Garbu in Potiskum, in neighboring Yobe state, according to witness Abdullahi Mohammed. Garbu is contesting a legislative seat in Feb. 14 balloting that includes a presidential election too close to call. Boko Haram denounces democracy.

French pimping trial starts for ex-IMF chief Strauss-Kahn

PARIS (AP)—Dominique Strauss-Kahn is going on trial for sex charges in France—the nation where he once was considered a top presidential contender. The former head of the International Monetary Fund, whose career went down in flames amid accusations of sexually assaulting a hotel maid in New York, is facing similarly shocking charges in France: aggravated pimping and involvement in a prostitution ring operating out of luxury hotels. The French economist known widely as DSK faces up to 10 years in prison and a 1.5 million-euro ($1.7 million) fine, as he and more than a dozen other French and Belgian businessmen and police officers go on trial beginning Monday in the northern French city of Lille. The trial is scheduled to last three weeks, with Strauss-Kahn not expected to testify until Feb. 10. Investigators have compiled hundreds of pages of testimony from prostitutes describing the orgies allegedly organized by the 65-year-old Strauss-Kahn and his co-defendants, centered on the expensive Carlton Hotel in Lille near the Belgian border. Strauss-Kahn says he took part in "libertine" activities but insists he never knew the women involved were prostitutes.

Focus

Consumers have enjoyed lower gas prices, but will they last?

By DON LEE
TRIBUNE WASHINGTON BUREAU

Filling up at the gas station has been a much more pleasant experience for Americans since last fall. Regular gas is now less than $2 a gallon in many states, down from around $3.30 just a year ago.

But how long will that last? It's just one of many questions stemming from the extraordinary drop in crude oil prices—a development that has boosted consumer confidence, hurt once-booming energy states and presented new opportunities—and challenges—for the U.S. and global economy.

Q: How long will it last?

A: Low prices at the pump may be short-lived because the cost of crude is likely to start rebounding in the second half of this year. That's based on predictions of future supply and demand, including that low prices will stimulate greater use and therefore lead to an increase in demand. Oil futures lately have been trading at about $45 per barrel, compared with an average $100 in the first half of last year. By this time next year, Moody's Analytics estimates that oil will bounce back up to $80 a barrel.

But there are other factors that could come into play. The fall in crude prices has started to slow drilling and exploration projects, which no longer look as profitable amid the falling cost of oil. And while theoretically that should lower supply and nudge prices back up, it won't happen right away. In some cases, oil producers may be reluctant to turn off the spigot, even if their profits are falling, because there are hefty costs to restarting operations. Some may tough it out, betting that prices will soon rise again to a level where they can at least break even.

All of which is to say that global supplies could keep growing and outpacing any pick-up in demand, prolonging an oil glut and keeping prices depressed.

Q: Why did oil prices fall so much, so fast?

A: A confluence of factors has contributed to the more than 50 percent slide in oil prices since September. The biggest is the steady rise in world petroleum supplies, mainly because of the shale-oil revolution in the U.S. Thanks to hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, and other drilling techniques, the U.S. has accounted for more than 80 percent of global crude production growth in the last five years. More recently, an increase in oil output in Iraq and Libya has further boosted capacity.

At the same time, there are signs of softening demand. Economies in Europe and Japan have been stagnant, and the Chinese economy, the biggest driver of global oil demand, is slowing down. The strong dollar also has helped pushed down oil prices.

Q: Who benefits the most from lower energy costs?

A: The U.S. will be one of the biggest winners. Car-related businesses, for example, will see more sales as people drive more, buy bigger vehicles and require more services. On average, an American household is projected to save $750 on gasoline costs this year compared with 2014, according to the Energy Department. States in the Southeast will benefit comparatively more as households in that region tend to spend a bigger share of their after-tax income on fuel.

Countries that import a lot of oil also stand to save hundreds of billions of dollars, including European nations, Japan, South Korea and China. But there are caveats. Heavy taxes in Europe and government subsidies in China will limit the benefits to consumers in those countries. Meanwhile, the savings to Japan will be partially offset by its weak currency. Like other commodities, oil is denominated in dollars, so Japan will have to pay that much more yen for every $1 of crude that it buys in international markets.

Q: Whom will it hurt the most?

A: Oil-producing countries such as Russia, Iran, Venezuela and Nigeria are already straining because they rely heavily on oil for government revenues. Other OPEC-member countries will feel a pinch too, but at $45 a barrel or even lower, Saudi Arabia, the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries' dominant and lowest-cost producer, can still make a solid profit.

While big oil companies will be cushioned somewhat by gains in their petroleum-refining business, smaller, less-efficient energy firms will face a revenue and credit squeeze that could drive some out of business. Significantly, a protracted oil price slump would take a toll on the U.S. shale industry, concentrated in Texas and North Dakota.

Q: How will it affect economic and job growth in the U.S?

A: On net, the U.S. economy could get as much as a big 0.5 percentage point lift from the steep oil price decline, primarily from billions of dollars freed up for spending by consumers. Many companies, too, will enjoy a bump in profits—more than 50 percent of in-house company economists said the drop in oil prices already had a positive effect on their firms, according to a January survey by the National Association for Business Economics.

Job growth also will get a boost, although it won't be evenly distributed. If oil prices remain low for an extended period, it could even drag some energy-dependent states into recession. While an oil-related boom-turned-bust in North Dakota won't mean much for the U.S. economy, a downturn in Texas is another matter. The Lone Star state has added some 1.3 million new jobs since the Great Recession, or about 14 percent of the total gains in the nation, and many undoubtedly were linked to the oil boom.

Q: Which country will call the shots in determining oil prices?

A: Much has been said about the diminished power of OPEC, the oil cartel dominated by Saudi Arabia, the longtime energy kingpin. Now there's another big kid on the block: The U.S. has once again become a "swing producer," as energy expert Daniel Yergin calls the impact from America's tremendous output of shale oil.

Even so, the U.S. today can't match the low-cost production of Saudi oil. And the kingdom's decision to keep pumping out large supplies—ostensibly to protect market share and put pressure on neighbors as well as rivals in America—is certain to test the financial mettle of U.S. producers as well as their ability to harness their drilling technologies more efficiently and effectively.

Overdrive

Kia cruises into US luxury market with the K900

KIA

With the 2015 K900, Kia is entering the full-size luxury sedan market here in the United States. It doesn't match its rivals yet in every category, but it's a rightful player in the market.

By BARRY SPYKER
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Kia's entry into the full-size luxury sedan market here shouldn't comes as too big of a surprise to folks around the globe. Kia's been building giant sedans for years—they just haven't been shipping them to the U.S. market.

These are dangerous waters here, what with the Mercedes S550, Lexus LS460, Audi A8 and the BMW 7-Series well-entrenched in the U.S., enjoying great sales and great reputations for performance and luxury.

But the 2015 Kia K900 comes ready to take on those big players: It's a good-looking, smooth-driving sedan that can hold its own in the luxury market yet stay true to its economy heritage. For starters, it costs thousands, even tens of them, less than much of its competition.

The five-passenger K900 is Kia's largest sedan yet with interior and trunk space comparable to the other guys. Plenty of headroom, shoulder and legroom here. And cargo capacity is 15.9 cubic feet, offering room to spare for the groceries or golf clubs.

Fit and finish inside is impressive, and touch surfaces are soft and supple. But there is a plethora of switches and knobs in the K900 and many of those have a low-cost feel in thisluxurious interior.

There's no shortage in the latest electronics, starting with a large 9.2-inch multifunction display in the middle of the dash. However, the system is rather complicated and not the most intuitive.

NUTS & BOLTS

- 2015 Kia K900 base price: $59,500
- As tested: $66,400 (w/ VIP Package)

Seats are ultra-comfortable even for the long hauls. Accent piping brings a touch of style to the seats and doors.

Opt for a VIP package and get 12-way power driver seat and headrest adjustment, ventilated and reclining rear seats with lumbar, soft-close doors, virtual instrument panel that includes driver head-up display and safety features like frontal collision warning system and adaptive cruise control.

Visibility is generally acceptable but the C-pillar is wide and at times hampers the rear view. Fortunately, there are parking sensors galore: a 360-degree top-down camera system, as well as front and rear cameras.

On the road, you'll find that the big rear-wheel-drive K900 is most at home on the open highway. After all, this is a cruiser. It's not floaty, however, and holds the road well. And Kia accentuated the luxury factor by making it as quiet as a city library, void of virtually any road or wind noise.

But hugging corners was more of a challenge than with the German brands, as one might expect. The suspension is soft and so it feels heavy on the corners. Switching from comfort to sport mode did little to improve the experience nor did it seem to add any extra punch.

There is no option for adaptive suspension, but the ride quality overall is smooth and comfy, and it easily absorbs the bumps and dips along most roads.

Kia powered up the K900 with a 5.0-liter engine that puts out 420 horsepower and 376 pound-feet of torque. Acceleration from a stoplight does not give you a jolt but across the band is strong and managed smoothly via an 8-speed automatic transmission. Zero-to-60 happens in 5.5 seconds, and it gets up to 100 in 13 seconds.

The Environmental Protection Agency estimates 15 city, 23 highway in the mpg department.

Also available is a 3.8-liter direct-injected V-6 that gets 311 horsepower and 293 pound-feet of torque. Of course, this powerplant is more mileage-friendly at 18 city, 27 highway.

Standard safety features include Uvo eServices: If your teenager wants to borrow the K900 for prom night, Uvo has monitoring features such as curfew alert and speed checks plus emergency assistance.

Also standard are blind-spot monitoring, lane-departure warning system and rear cross-traffic alert when backing out of the driveway.

The K900 comes in only two trim levels: the V-8 and V-6. All V-8s get 19-inch wheels, upgraded leather, LED headlights and a panoramic sunroof to let in the sun and a power rear shade to keep it off the backs of passengers. Music is provided by a 17-speaker Lexicon audio system that is so crisp you'll want to hear the end of that song before shutting down in the driveway.

U.S. motorists should welcome the long-awaited arrival of a large-luxe sedan from Kia. It does not match its rivals yet in every category, like road performance and brand reputation.

But the K900 is a rightful player in the market. And Kia remains true to its roots offering a ton of standard features and a price that will allow more folks into the luxury arena.

UNDER THE HOOD

Coasting in gear is more fuel-efficient than coasting in neutral

By BRAD BERGHOLDT
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Q: I have a car with a V-6 engine and 5-speed manual transmission. If I drive a constant 60 miles per hour I average 30 miles per gallon on the highway. I understand from an automotive magazine that a car uses a gallon an hour if idling only. According to a popular magazine, a car would use more gas if coasting in neutral than in gear. I find this hard to believe, because if my car is going downhill for 60 miles at 60 mph in neutral it would only use one gallon. However, if it is in gear and still goes downhill at sixty miles an hour it definitely will use two gallons. My question: can you definitively prove or disprove once and for all if the popular magazine's contention is correct that coasting in idle uses more gas than coasting in gear?

A: This is fun stuff. Assuming your car is fuel-injected rather than a carbureted oldie, you'll use little if any fuel while going downhill, if in gear. Basically anytime you lift your foot from the gas pedal while moving (coasting) you'll enter fuel cut mode (the fuel injectors are turned off). The engine management system recognizes elevated intake manifold vacuum as vehicle deceleration and the wheels/driveline will keep the engine spinning without fuel being used. This is great because it saves fuel and reduces exhaust emissions. On a long downhill grade the system may re-enable the injectors occasionally to keep the catalytic converter hot, and in all cases, the injectors are restored prior to the vehicle coming to a stop. When idling in gear (stopped) or neutral (stopped or moving with normal idle vacuum), a tiny amount of fuel is metered to keep the engine running. Keep in mind fuel economy varies widely with engine load. You may see significantly more or less than 30 mpg while driving, depending on conditions.

Coasting in neutral is illegal in most places as vehicle control can be compromised. Done carefully, back in Dad's day, this was a common fuel saving strategy. Carburetors weren't very smart when it came to deceleration.

Q: We married retirees have a '77 Camaro that has been listed as inoperable with the local Department of Motor Vehicles for at least 3 years, sitting in our driveway under a car cover. My wife no longer drives it, but she doesn't want to get rid of the Camaro. I got tired of changing the plugs. The engine is shot, but the body and paint are great. Now the doors are stuck and I can't open them. Any suggestions?

A: Since it's both doors that are acting up, my hunch is the door weatherstrips have become stuck to the door jambs. I'd try spraying some silicone lubricant (use the slender tube applicator) into the gap around the perimeter of each door and let it soak for a few hours. Try one more application then some gentle pulling and pushing. Wait another few hours then work the doors a bit harder. It's possible you may tear one of the weatherstrips if you really yank hard, so take your time with this for perhaps a week or more. Have you considered a GM replacement crate engine? This is the least costly and most popular version of the GM crate engine series and is applicable to your Camaro.

Brad Bergholdt is an automotive technology instructor at Evergreen Valley College in San Jose, Calif. Readers may send him email at under-the-hood(at) earthlink.net; he cannot make personal replies.

Life & Style

Companies strike serious, somber tone in Super Bowl ads

NEW YORK (AP)—Forget slapstick and sex in Super Bowl ads: This year, serious was the name of the game.

Nationwide ran an ad on preventable childhood death. Carnival struck a somber note with a voiceover by John F. Kennedy speaking lyrically about the sea. And a public service announcement by coalition No More depicted a chilling 911 call from a battered woman to demonstrate the terror of domestic abuse.

Other advertisers had positive, albeit equally serious themes: McDonald's said it would let some customers pay with acts of kindness, Coca-Cola showed online negativity and bullying turning positive and Procter & Gamble's ad for its Always feminine products brand tried to redefine what it means to do things like a girl.

"It's a shame there aren't any commercials for antidepressants because these commercials make me want some," said Jon Early, who was watching the game in New York with friends. "Football is supposed to be an escape."

The serious tone is an effort to win over Americans who have a lower tolerance for crass ads with an overuse of sexually explicit themes and sophomoric humor. They also have short attention spans these days, thanks to the bite-sized communication of social media.

The serious spots were a continuation of a trend that started last year when advertisers shied away from the tactics that had been commonplace during Super Bowl. The difference this year is that many of the serious ads had an overarching "message" to live better, think better and be better.

With 30-second ads costing $4.5 million for the chance to market their brand to 110-plus million Americans, advertisers were trying to stand out by marketing socially conscious messages. In the process, they hoped to boost the image of their brands.

AP

This file image provided by Wix.com shows a portion of the company's television ad scheduled to be aired during the Super Bowl on Sunday, Feb. 1, 2015, this one featuring retired football player Brett Favre in a funny fictional business called "Favre and Carve."

"The Super Bowl reflects what's happening in the country," said Tim Calkins, a marketing professor at the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University. "Maybe in the country today we're a little more reflective and a little more pensive."

SERIOUS TONE

A Microsoft ad with a voiceover by rapper Common told the story of Braylon O'Neill, a boy who was born missing the tibia and fibula bones in both of his legs so he had to learn to live with prosthetic legs developed by Microsoft.

The ad struck some similar notes with Toyota's Camry ad, which featured Paralympian Amy Purdy, who also has prosthetic legs snowboarding and dancing set to a speech by Muhammad Ali that ends "I'll show you how great I am."

Some serious ads bordered on sober. Nissan returned to the Super Bowl after 18 years with an ad featuring the story line of an up-and-coming race driver and his wife struggling to balance work and raising their son. In a jarring detail that many on social media pointed out, the ad was set to "Cats in the Cradle" by Harry Chapin, who was killed in a car crash.

And a Nationwide ad showed a boy riding a school bus and lamenting he'll never learn to fly, or travel the world with my best friend, or even grow up, because he died in an accident. The ad was aimed at stopping preventable childhood accidents, but Charles Taylor, marketing professor at the Villanova School of Business in Pennsylvania, said it received the most negative response from his ad viewing panel.

"It's just playing with fire focusing on an adolescents' death in the context of the Super Bowl," he said.

POSITIVE BUT SERIOUS

Other advertisers tried to implore people to do positive things.

In apparent commentary on how heavily food companies market to Americans, Weight Watchers' Super Bowl debut ad showed pizza, doughnuts in large portions with an ominous voiceover saying "You gotta eat, right?" A tagline said Weight Watchers can help members take control.

But it didn't resonate with all viewers, many of who were at Super Bowl parties eating snacks. "Some people are saying it made them want to eat more than anything," said Villanova's Taylor.

Meanwhile, fast food chain McDonald's announced it will randomly select customers who can pay for their food with acts of goodwill, such as calling their moms and telling them they love them as part of a Valentine's Day promotion that starts Monday.

HUMOR IN BETWEEN

Not all ads were serious, though.

Nationwide's other ad showed "Mindy Project" star Mindy Kaling walking around New York believing she is invisible and doing scandalous acts, including sitting naked in Central Park and going through a car wash. Then, she tries to kiss actor Matt Damon, but as it turns out, he can see her. The idea is Nationwide doesn't treat customers like they're invisible.

Naomi Zikmund-Fisher, a psychotherapist watching the game in Ann Arbor, Michigan, said the ad appealed to her. "It sucked you in as a plot and then ruined it for her," she said.

Another ad scored early. Chevrolet's spot before kickoff appeared to be a live game feed that turned into static and a blank screen, shocking some viewers. Chevrolet used the trick to show that its Colorado truck has 4G LTE Wi Fi, allowing for live game streaming in the truck.

"That one got all of our attention," said Kirin Jessel, who watched the game with coworkers in Oakland, Calif. "We were thinking `Oh my God, what's happening.'"

Stars prominent on and off the field at Super Bowl 49

GLENDALE, Ariz. (AP)—Stars converged on the Super Bowl both on and off the field on Sunday, with Britney Spears and Mark Wahlberg among the celebrities who watched the game and an elaborate halftime show by Katy Perry.

Wahlberg, a Boston native, was pulling for a victory by the New England Patriots—and an invite to their after-party.

Actors Chris Evans, a Patriots fan, and Seattle Seahawks fan Chris Pratt continued their rivalry in the stands; each wore their respective team's gear in a picture posted online by Pratt's wife Anna Faris.

Mariska Hargitay, comedians Kevin Hart and Will Ferrell, and rapper Kanye West and his wife Kim Kardashian were among other stars at the game.

The stars were treated to an elaborate halftime show by Katy Perry, Lenny Kravitz and Missy Elliot at halftime. Perry's extravaganza featured giant palm trees, bikini-clad dancers and fireworks.

The game capped several days of parties and events hosted by major stars, including Oscar winner Jamie Foxx, Drake and Wahlberg, who was the celebrity host of a charity event on the eve of the game.

West performed alongside Rihanna at a party thrown by DirecTV on Saturday night where guests included Kardashian, John Legend and his wife Chrissy Teigen. Kardashian posted a photo of the foursome dining at a Waffle House restaurant after the party.

Legend sang "America the Beautiful" before kickoff. Teigen kissed her husband and snapped pictures of him before he took his seat at his piano.

Some famous attendees didn't come to root for a particular team.

Spears didn't announce her preferred team, and neither did Former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who said she just wanted to enjoy a good game.

One star who was at the gates of the game but didn't get to go inside was country singer Dierks Bentley. He performed at an official tailgate before kickoff, but had to leave to fly to a taping of Ellen DeGeneres' show in Los Angeles.

"Ellen owes me big time," Bentley joked Sunday. "She better pull through with a good interview, a lot of couch time. I want Justin Bieber-style couch time."

Bentley said he wasn't all that upset about missing the game: He's an Arizona Cardinals fan, and they haven't been to the Super Bowl since 2009.

IN HUMBLE GRATITUDE

We, the family of the late

†Jesus Quitugua Deleon Guerrero

Wish to express our sincere and profound gratitude to each and every one of our relatives and friends for you presence and prayers during the eight day masses and nightly rosary offered for our beloved †Jesus, and most especially on his funeral mass as we celebrated his passage to eternal life.

Our special thanks to Rev. Pale' Ryan Jimenez, Pale James Balajadia, the Clergy, TanKo, our Techa Winnie C. Camacho, the Mount Carmel Church and Santa Soledad Choir for assisting in the Eucharistic celebration.

We are forever grateful for your love, comfort and support. You will always be in our hearts and prayers.

Thank You - Si Yu'us Ma'ase

Wilhelma (Juanita) C. Deleon Guerrero, children and family

Technology, Elliott give Perry's Super Bowl show a boost

By MESFIN FEKADU
AP MUSIC WRITER

AP

Singer Katy Perry performs during halftime of NFL Super Bowl XLIX football game between the Seattle Seahawks and the New England Patriots Sunday, Feb. 1, 2015, in Glendale, Ariz.

Katy Perry roared loud, possibly because there was a jungle behind her.

Perry's Super Bowl halftime show Sunday, with its eye-popping, colorful visual effects, illusions and lights was a success mainly because of others—including the energetic Missy Elliott.

Did Perry even break a sweat?

The pop star kicked off the performance atop a robotic tiger, her outfit—one of four—covered in a flame design some likened to Will Ferrell's skater outfit in "Blades of Glory." She seemed ready to take the big stage, her voice strong over what sounded like a pre-recorded track.

The stage turned to a futuristic vibe for the Southern, electro-flavored "Dark Horse" and into a beach complete with dancing sharks and surfboards and bobbing beach balls for "Teenage Dream" and "California Gurls." It came off like a music video.

Perry relied too much on spectacle rather than her own talent. That was evident when Lenny Kravitz joined her for a rock-filled version of "I Kissed a Girl," in which he was the highlight, shining on the guitar.

But the 12-minute performance turned into "The Missy Elliott Show" when the reclusive rapper hit the stage as the beginning beat of "Get Ur Freak On" blasted. A decade later, the song still sounded like a hit as Elliott rapped like a veteran.

Perry joined Elliott, attempting to dance beside her but coming off like a student lost in choreography class. She nicely rocked an oversize jersey, but had zero swag. Elliott went on to the steal the thunder with performances of "Work It" and "Lose Control."

Perry ended her set in a shimmery gown, as she rose in the air and slowed it down for the inspirational "Firework" as, appropriately, fireworks burst.

That wasn't the only fiery moment: Before the game began, "Frozen" star Idina Menzel belted out an outstanding live rendition of the national anthem ahead of the big game in Phoenix.

Menzel was confident in all-black, singing what she assured would be live days before Super Bowl. After she sang the last note, she yelled in excitement: "Yes!"

"I didn't want to rush," Menzel said in an interview after the performance. "I wanted to take in the moment and connect to the song that I was singing, not get swept away by all the grandiosity and excitement, and connect. And sing from my heart."

The performance comes a month after the Tony-winning star was criticized for her performance of "Let It Go" during "Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve." At one point the crowd booed loudly, but it was because Patriots Coach Bill Belichick was shown on screen.

Asked if she was distracted by the booing, Menzel said: "I knew better. I knew I hit the note well, I wasn't worried it was me."

"And they warn you," she added, laughing.

John Legend, in typical form, brought the soul when he sang "America the Beautiful." He hit all the right notes while playing piano before the Seattle Seahawks took on the New England Patriots.

Kravitz said he was grateful for Perry's call to join her onstage.

"This wasn't my thing. She asked me to come and perform with her and I said, `Yes' and it ended up being a really great experience," he said in an interview.

Steven Tyler headlines Rolling Stone party on Super Bowl eve

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (AP)—Aerosmith frontman Steven Tyler charged up a frenzied crowd on the eve of the Super Bowl that features his beloved New England Patriots.

Tyler played fan favorites "Dream On," "Sweet Emotion" and "Cryin'"at the Rolling Stone party in front of an audience that sang along in unison for most of the songs.

The venue was adorned with Rolling Stone covers from over the years, and Tyler made a reference to magazine founder Jann Wenner's influence on the music industry between songs.

Tyler followed British pop star Charli XCX, who set the stage with an energetic set and asked the crowd if it was excited for the Super Bowl.

"I thought it was baseball until a few months ago. I'm from the U.K."

Tyler largely avoided any reference to the Patriots despite a long history with the team. The Boston rocker has been a fan of the Patriots for several years, and famously sang the national anthem in the AFC Championship two years ago before the Patriots lost to the Baltimore Ravens. The performance was widely ridiculed as he botched some of the lyrics.

AP

In this Friday, Nov. 14, 2014, file photo, Steven Tyler arrives at the Hollywood Film Awards at the Palladium, in Los Angeles.

Following the controversy over deflated footballs during this year's AFC title game, Tyler joined Matt Damon, Ben Affleck, John Krasinski and other well-known Patriots fans in a mock video on "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" in which they claimed responsibility for the air being taken out of the balls.

Tyler's top billing at an A-list party on one of the entertainment world's biggest party nights is a testament to his staying power as a rock `n' roll icon. Aerosmith's longevity spans more than a generation, including their rise to stardom in the early 1970s, a rough period during the early `80s when drugs tore the band apart and a resurgence in the late `80s and early `90s that put them back on the top of the charts. In recent years, Tyler was a judge on "American Idol," endearing him to a younger generation of fans.

'Sniper' shoots down Super Bowl weekend record with $31.9M

NEW YORK (AP)—"American Sniper" shot down another box-office record: Its $31.9 million is the biggest Super Bowl weekend gross ever.

According to studio estimates Sunday, the Clint Eastwood film narrowly surpassed the previous top Super Bowl weekend draw at the North American box office. The concert film "Hannah Montana/Miley Cyrus: The Best of Both Worlds Concert Tour" opened with $31.1 million against the NFL's big game in 2008.

Hollywood often avoids competing with the Super Bowl as movie-going falls dramatically on Sunday, but "American Sniper" has proven an unlikely sensation. It has now made $248.9 million in six weeks (and only three weeks of wide release), making it the most lucrative war movie without adjusting for inflation. (The distinction was previously held by Steven Spielberg's "Saving Private Ryan.")

The competition was thin, as Hollywood held off any high-profile releases, effectively ceding the weekend to football.

1. "**American Sniper**," $31.9 million ($11.1 million international).
2. "**Paddington**," $8.5 million.
3. "**Project Almanac**," $8.5 million.
4. "**Black or White**," $6.5 million.
5. "**The Boy Next Door**," $6.1 million.
6. "**The Wedding Ringer**," $5.7 million.
7. "**The Imitation Game**," $5.2 million.
8. "**Taken 3**," $3.7 million ($21.2 million international).
9. "**Strange Magic**," $3.4 million.
10. "**The Loft**," $2.9 million.

The Weinstein Co. animated adaptation "Paddington" came in a distant second with $8.5 million in its third weekend. In a virtual tie with it was Paramount's found-footage, time-traveling thriller "Project Almanac."

Made by Michael Bay's production company, Platinum Dunes, "Project Almanac" led a trio of new releases with modest box-office ambitions.

"Black or White," a racially-charged custody drama that reteams Kevin Costner with "The Upside of Anger" director Mike Binder, opened in fourth with $6.5 million. Costner put up his own money to help finance the film, which Relativity Media distributed.

Open Road's "The Loft," a much-delayed remake of a 2008 Dutch thriller directed by its original filmmaker, Erik Van Looy, attracted little interest. It made just $2.9 million.

That wasn't much more than the $1.5 million pulled in by a package of TV reruns. The HBO series "Game of Thrones" earned that in 205 Imax theaters by showing previously aired episodes ahead of the April debut of the show's fifth season.

Celebrities offer support for Whitney Houston's daughter

ATLANTA (AP)—Celebrities are offering their support and prayers for Whitney Houston's daughter, who authorities say was recently found face down and unresponsive in a bathtub in a suburban Atlanta townhome.

Police said 21-year-old Bobbi Kristina Brown was taken Saturday to a hospital in the northern Atlanta suburb of Roswell, Georgia.

La Toya Jackson is one of several celebrities who used Twitter to express her support Sunday.

"Let's All Send Love Light & Prayers to Bobbi Kristina Brown!" Jackson tweeted. "Wishing Her A Healthy & Speedy Recovery!"

Singer-songwriter Missy Elliott said on Twitter that she's also throwing her support behind Brown. "Still Praying 4 Bobbi Kristina," Elliott tweeted in part.

Brown is the daughter of Houston and R&B singer Bobby Brown.

Lindsey Harber, a spokeswoman at North Fulton Hospital, where police say Houston's daughter was taken, declined comment.

"I can't confirm she's even there," Harber said Sunday.

Brown's husband, Nick Gordon, along with a friend, found the woman in a bathtub on Saturday, Roswell police said in a statement. The friend called 911 while Brown's husband performed CPR on the woman because they did not believe she was breathing nor had a pulse, said Officer Lisa Holland, a Roswell Police Department spokeswoman.

Police gave Brown additional care before she was taken to the hospital, Holland said.

The townhome is in a subdivision near a bend in the Chattahoochee River, about 20 miles northeast of downtown Atlanta.

Whitney Houston was found dead in a hotel bathtub on Feb. 11, 2012, in Beverly Hills, California. The 48-year-old Houston had struggled for years with cocaine, marijuana and pills, and her behavior had become erratic. Authorities examining Houston's death found a dozen prescription drug bottles in the hotel suite. They concluded that Houston accidentally drowned. Heart disease and cocaine use were listed as contributing factors in Houston's death.

Over her career, Houston sold more than 50 million records in the United States alone. Her voice, an ideal blend of power, grace and beauty, made classics out of songs such as "Saving All My Love For You," "I Will Always Love You," "The Greatest Love of All" and "I'm Every Woman." Her six Grammys were only a fraction of her many awards.

Houston left her entire estate to her daughter.

AP

In this Feb. 12, 2011, file photo, singer Whitney Houston, left, and daughter Bobbi Kristina Brown arrive at an event in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Kanye West, Rihanna rock DirecTV party on eve of Super Bowl

GLENDALE, Ariz. (AP)—The crowd at DirecTV's Super Saturday Night party came for Rihanna, and got a healthy dose of Kanye West as a bonus.

West trotted on stage as Rihanna sang the opening lines of their hit "All of the Lights," a surprise guest at an event that's become known for delivering shows from music's superstars on the eve of the Super Bowl.

Rihanna opened the performance with "Rock Star" and moved through several of her hits, including "Umbrella," "Rude Boy" and "We Found Love."

She reached out and touched fans and moved effortlessly around a semicircle stage that allowed her to reach fans throughout the venue.

West also interacted with the audience, slapping hands as he performed. He pointed and glanced up at a balcony where his wife, Kim Kardashian, watched and snapped a selfie with friends.

A few feet away actor Aaron Paul leaned on a rail bobbing his head to the music, and the crowd included other celebrities and athletes such as retired NFL players Tony Gonzalez and Michael Irvin and entrepreneur Mark Cuban, who helped throw the party.

Guests screamed, danced and took advantage of the closeness of the performers to snap photos and videos.

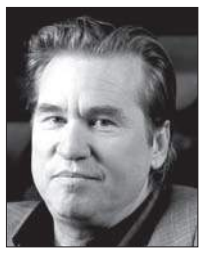
After a few duets, Rihanna left the stage as West performed "Jesus Walks," "Black Skinhead" "Flashing Lights" and other hits.

Both performers opted to slow down the tempo at times, with Rihanna performing "Stay" and West singing a new song, "Only One."

Their performance was a latest in a string of strong lineups for the invite-only DirecTV party, which has had Justin Timberlake, Katy Perry and Beyonce and Jay Z perform at previous pre-Super Bowl parties.

Val Kilmer says he's awaiting tests but doesn't have tumor

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Val Kilmer confirmed that he is hospitalized and awaiting medical results, but said he has no tumor and hasn't had surgery.



Kilmer

In a message on his Facebook page Saturday, the 55-year-old Kilmer said he was in UCLA Medical Center's intensive care for a "complication."

"We are waiting for x ray results and will stay close to my doctors advising, my family and Christian Science practitioner when all the facts are in," he said in the post. "Then I'll do what's best and be back at it sooner than u can shake a gossip column at an out of work actor."

Earlier Saturday, his publicist, Liz Rosenberg, confirmed his hospitalization. She said the tests were for a possible tumor and that his two adult children were caring for him at the hospital. Rosenberg confirmed his Facebook post late Saturday.

Kilmer thanked fans for their support and told them not to worry.

Kilmer is known for roles in movies ranging from "Top Gun" to "Heat" to "Tombstone."

George R.R. Martin recalls TV pilot with alien at Super Bowl

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona (AP)—The creator of "Game of Thrones" says he once wrote a TV pilot with a plot focused on an alien landing at the Super Bowl.

George R.R. Martin is now a famous author who has the clout to go to the Super Bowl.

Martin attended the Rolling Stone party on the eve of the Super Bowl and plans to attend the game Sunday, his first ever trip to the big game.

He is rooting for the Seattle Seahawks because "the opposing team is the evil Patriots. The deflaters, the spygate-rs."

Martin grew up in New York and is no fan of the team that is the Jets' archrival and faced the Giants twice in the Super Bowl.

He still hopes that his alien Super Bowl idea sees the light of day as he plans to make the concept into a graphic novel.

'How to Train Your Dragon 2' tops Annie Awards

NEW YORK (AP)—The DreamWorks sequel "How to Train Your Dragon 2" topped the 42nd Annie Awards, taking best feature at the annual honors for animation.

In the Saturday night ceremony hosted at the Royce Hall on the UCLA campus in Los Angeles, "How to Train Your Dragon" won five awards in all. It also took best director for Dean DeBlois, as well as prizes for feature character design, storyboarding and music.

"Dragon" bested Disney's top contender, the superhero tale "Big Hero 6." But the film that preceded "Hero" in theaters, "Feast," won best short film.

Warner Bros.' acclaimed but Oscar-snubbed "The Lego Movie" won for the Annie best feature writing.

"How to Train Your Dragon 2" will head to the Feb. 22 Oscars as the best-animation favorite.

Stepmother wishes others wouldn't devalue her role

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR ABBY: I'm a 42-year-old divorced woman with no children. My ex-husband has a son whose life I was a part of for 18 years. When people ask if I have kids, my reply is, "Yes, I have a stepson."

Why do people think it's OK to say things like, "That's not the same as having your own," or, "That doesn't count"? Then they usually go on to ask why I don't have children of my own.

My response is a big fat lie. I say, "It just never happened." The truth is my ex didn't want any more children. What can I say to these people to let them know that they need to stop and think about what they say and ask, because their word choice in this circumstance is hurtful to the point of tears?

STEPMOM IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR STEPMOM: A person who would downplay your role as a parent is rude, thoughtless and not worth your time. As to asking why someone is childless, I have addressed this subject in my column before. While many folks start conversations by asking whether someone has children, it can be a dangerous question.

I learned my lesson and stopped asking after having received an answer from one man that his son was doing life in prison as an accomplice to murder. Another man told me he had two children, a daughter and an estranged son who was also serving a long sentence -- for selling narcotics. Neither person was happy to have been asked. After that, I stopped asking.

I see no reason why you shouldn't simply tell the truth about why you are child-free. Not having (or wanting) children is nothing to be ashamed of—it's a personal choice that an increasing number of couples have opted for without regret.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: My boyfriend and I have been together for 18 months. Last night we were talking about doing more in the bedroom, and he told me that he is bisexual.

I have nothing against the LGBT community, but finding this out after so long shocked me. I'm worried now, and I can't seem to wrap my head around the fact that he has sex with guys. I just can't quite look at or think of him the same way.

I really do love him and can still see a future with him. I just don't know how to handle this BIG news. Please, Abby, you're my only hope.

LIZ IN TEXAS

DEAR LIZ: I would be curious about why your boyfriend waited so long to tell you. Because someone is bisexual does not mean the person is unfaithful and sleeping with both sexes at the same time. It simply means the person is attracted to members of both sexes. You need to have further discussion with your boyfriend regarding his attitude about his COMMITMENT TO YOU before deciding what to do about his "big" news.

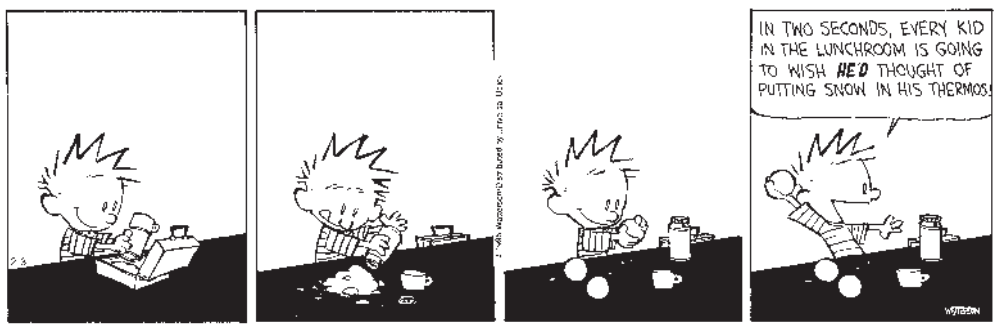
■■■

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



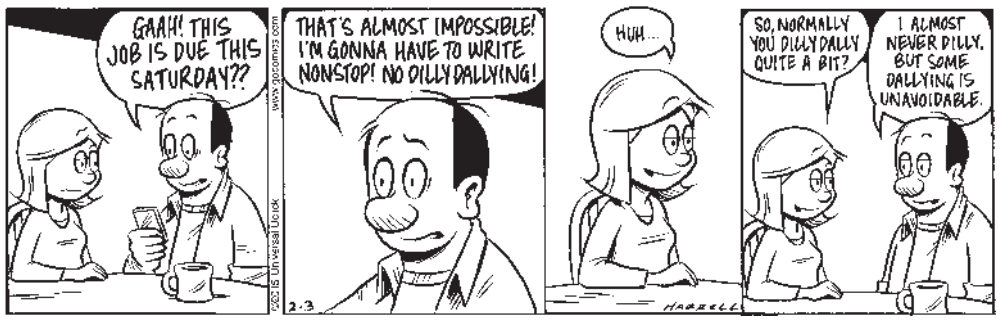
Garfield®

By Jim Davis

I'M TAKING A TEST, GARFIELD
"WHAT IS YOUR MATURITY LEVEL?"
WHERE ARE MY CRAYONS?
THAT'S AN AUTOMATIC TEN-POINT DEDUCTION
JIM DAVIS 2-3

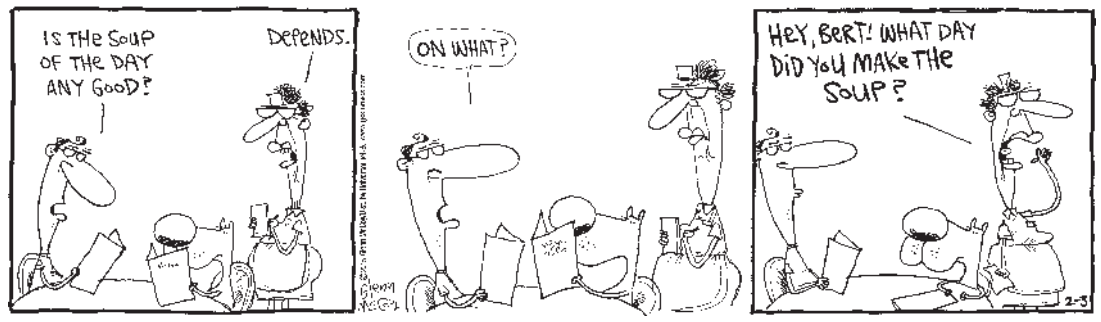
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


GAAH! THIS JOB IS DUE THIS SATURDAY??
THAT'S ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE! I'M GONNA HAVE TO WRITE NONSTOP! NO DILLY DALLYING!
HUH...
SO, NORMALLY YOU DILLY DALLY QUITE A BIT?
I ALMOST NEVER DILLY. BUT SOME DALLYING IS UNAVOIDABLE.
2-3

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

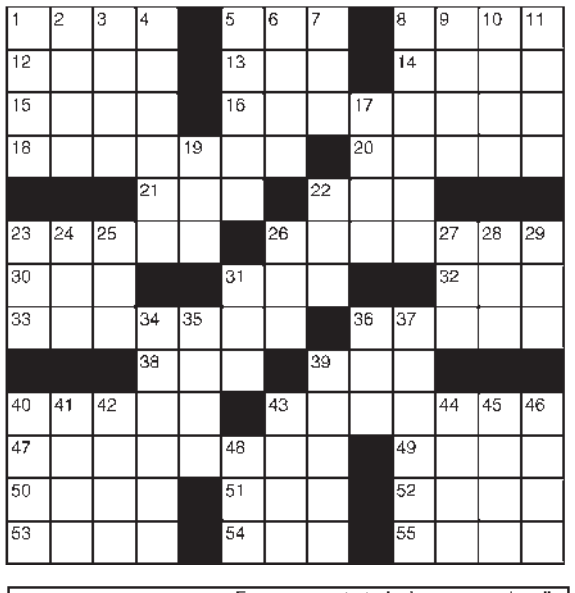
ACROSS
1 Cauldron concoction
5 Track circuit
8 Nursery furniture
12 Taleteller
13 "Born in the —"
14 Tardy
15 Shrek, for one
16 Liturgical song
18 Witch's spell (Scot.)
20 Alternative to flats
21 Scoundrel
22 Fellows
23 Brief
26 Rosa's place, in "El Paso"
30 Anger
31 Pond carp
32 Drag along
33 GI's water holder
36 Lightweight wood
38 Wall climber
39 Namely (Abbr.)
40 Backbone
43 Bach's "Coffee —"
47 Singer Blu
49 Eastern potentate
50 Lotion additive
51 Homer's bartender
52 Blast furnace fuel
53 Repair
54 Make up your mind
55 Aspen gear

DOWN
1 United nations
2 Latvia's capital
3 Deserve
4 "That saved a — like me"
5 Clear of thought
6 Memo acronym
7 Skillet
8 Customer
9 Fight the clock
10 "— have to do for now"
11 Honey bunch?
17 Afterward
19 Shaft of light
22 Avril follower
23 Selfie, e.g.
24 Savings initials
25 Midmorning
26 Not pro
27 Under the weather
28 Greek consonants
29 — Khan
31 Crucial
34 Shaded slightly
35 Endlessly
36 Crib
37 Cortes' victims
39 Lot attendant
40 Ponzi scheme, e.g.
41 Wan
42 Aware of
43 Hoofbeat sound
44 Uncontrolled
45 Polynesian bar decoration
46 War god
48 Punk rock offshoot

Solution time: 22 mins.

B	U	F	F	■	U	M	P	■	C	L	I	F
I	S	L	E	■	P	A	Y	■	A	I	D	C
B	E	E	N	■	S	C	R	A	B	B	L	E
B	R	A	N	D	T	■	O	M	B	F	E	S
■	■	■	E	U	R	O	■	P	I	E	■	■
C	H	E	C	K	E	R	S	■	E	T	C	H
P	E	N	■	E	A	S	Y	A	■	T	O	E
A	R	T	S	■	M	O	N	O	P	O	L	Y
■	■	■	H	E	P	■	N	O	N	E	■	■
A	G	R	E	E	D	■	■	N	E	P	I	E	W
J	E	O	P	A	R	D	Y	■	T	I	R	E
A	N	N	E	■	A	I	M	■	I	R	I	S
R	C	E	D	■	G	A	S	■	C	E	N	T

Yesterday's answer 2-3



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Isla Fisher, 39; Nathan Lane, 59; Morgan Fairchild, 65; Blythe Danner, 72.

Happy Birthday: Jump into action. Be vocal about your plans and intentions. Strive for quality and building a strong, stable professional future. Take hold of your personal situation and bring about whatever change is required in order to reach your dreams, destinations or long-term goals. Keep an open mind and prepare to experiment and perfect as you go along. Your numbers are 8, 15, 17, 21, 34, 37, 40.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Direct your energy wisely. Keep your mind on what's important, not on what others are doing, and you will reach your goal. A social encounter will spark a renewed interest in something or someone that you used to find inspiring. ✪✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Don't take anything or anyone for granted. You may know what you want to do, but expect to face opposition. Don't be daunted by comments or criticism. Focus on finishing what you start and accommodating others only when possible. ✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Don't expect to receive help from others and you won't be disappointed. Making changes to your home or professional direction will turn out to be a good investment. Learn new skills and don't let a personal relationship limit what you can do. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Get down to business and you will excel. A partnership will be problematic if you are too compliant. Don't make a hasty decision that can have costly results. It's OK to do things differently or to follow your own path. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): You may be all wrapped up in your personal relationships and trying to make changes to the way you live, but you should be focusing on financial and contractual matters that have the potential to turn costly. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Keep your thoughts and feelings to yourself. Someone will use personal information against you if you are too open. Take time out for self-improvement and raising your level of confidence. Don't give in to emotional blackmail or demanding individuals. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Don't fight the inevitable. Go with the flow and see where it takes you. The changes that take place will turn out surprisingly well. Use your intelligence and take advantage of an emotional opportunity. Don't limit what you can do. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Follow your heart, not what you hear. Gather information and come to your own conclusions before you make a choice. A change in the way you do things will help you avoid someone who wants to take control or shove you aside. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Listen carefully, but do your own fact-finding. The information you gather will clear up issues you have been concerned about, allowing you to move forward and make positive personal changes at home. Act fast and finish what you start. ✪✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Take care of pressing family matters. Get involved in your community and you will be able to control the outcome of a situation that could affect an investment that concerns you. An old friend or lover will give you something to think about. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Emotional matters will surface. Don't put off what must be taken care of immediately. You can't move forward without clearing a path. It's out with the old and in with the new. Raise pressing issues and secure your future. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Get involved in organizational events that allow you to meet interesting and informative individuals. Sharing your thoughts will spark interest and lead to unexpected opportunities. Mix business with pleasure and you'll make a new and very valuable acquaintance. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are outgoing, entertaining and endearing. You are passionate and protective. *Eugenia's website—**eugenialast.com**, Eugenia's android app @ **http://bit.ly/exhoro** and join Eugenia on **twitter/facebook/linkedin**.*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

5					6		9	
					9			8
			1	5	3			
		1				6	8	7
		2		1		5		
9	3	8				1		
			3	6	7			
7			5					
	2		4					3

Difficulty Level ★★ 2/03

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

4	3	2	5	6	7	8	9	1
8	9	6	2	3	1	5	4	7
1	7	5	8	4	9	3	6	2
3	6	9	1	8	5	2	7	4
2	5	4	7	9	6	1	3	8
7	8	1	4	2	3	6	5	9
6	1	3	9	7	8	4	2	5
9	2	8	3	5	4	7	1	6
5	4	7	6	1	2	9	8	3

Difficulty Level ★ 2/02

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

MIKE NICHOLS (1931-2014) Solution: 11 letters

R	E	S	O	L	C	P	A	C	T	O	R	W	Y	T
Y	E	T	H	V	A	N	Y	A	Y	N	O	T	K	G
N	G	D	T	V	N	M	T	M	E	L	I	E	S	N
N	A	B	E	I	M	O	M	L	F	W	I	R	W	I
E	T	L	E	E	G	A	A	U	S	R	O	N	O	H
J	S	N	D	R	R	I	D	V	E	E	U	G	K	T
F	A	A	A	G	N	Ⓑ	R	Y	G	H	P	R	H	L
F	L	M	I	E	Ⓞ	L	W	B	D	C	S	A	C	A
O	O	R	S	Ⓙ	E	A	E	L	E	A	D	D	S	E
G	H	E	Y	B	S	R	S	E	L	C	N	U	E	R
S	C	G	A	E	L	M	S	L	W	A	E	A	P	A
I	I	N	N	I	L	K	A	E	O	D	K	T	A	C
V	N	A	N	I	R	C	V	X	N	L	I	E	U	S
A	I	C	F	O	L	I	A	H	K	I	M	A	L	O
D	O	O	W	K	L	I	S	G	E	G	R	O	W	N

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Actor, Annabel, Annie, Berlin, Breeder, Brigitte, Callas, Cher, Closer, Daisy, Davis Goff, Diane Sawyer, Elaine, Emmy, Films, German, Gilda, Graduate, Grammy, Grown, Honors, Jenny, Job, Knowledge, Lead, Live, Luv, Margot, Max, Mike, Mikhail, Nicholas, Oscar, Paul, Pavel, Peschkowsky, Real Thing, Silkwood, Stage, Tony, Uncle, Ups, Vanya, Wit, Wolf, Works

Yesterday's Answer: Repeating

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Luxury 1BR & 1BTH approximately 600 sq/ft **$500**/month
***Wi-Fi & nighttime security excluded**

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JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Examination Announcement Number: LB-JVA-15-001 **Position: Legislative Assistant**
PL-UNGRADED: $1,148.36 B/W **Opening Date: January 26, 2015**
The salary will be determined by the qualification of the appointee **Closing Date: February 9, 2015**
Location: Honorable Jesus P. Mafnas Memorial Building (CNMI Legislature), Capitol Hill, Saipan

General Duties:
- Drafts legislative documents including but not limited to resolutions, committee reports, and letters, as requested by the Chairperson of the Committee to which he or she is assigned to;
- Attends legislative session and committee meetings as requested by the Chairperson of his or her assigned committee;
- Performs investigative and legislative research and analysis;
- Prepares reports and studies including preparation of letters, legislation, and related documents as requested by members of his or her assigned respective legislative house;
- Maintains a reasonable record of all tasks assigned by his or her immediate supervisor Chairperson of the Committee or other members of his or her assigned respective legislative house and such record is subject to review upon request; and
- Performs other duties as assigned.

Qualifications and Requirements:
- **Possess four years relevant work experience or a minimum of an AA or AS degree or higher from a United States accredited institution of higher education with one year of legislative work experience;**
- **Possess ample knowledge of the legislative process;**
- **Excellent research, analytical, and strong writing skills; and**
- **Ability to produce results within limited time frames and work under pressure on a daily basis.**

Education requirements may be substituted with related experience

Education and training claimed under item 19(A) through 19(F) of the Application for Employment must be substantiated by a copy of an official diploma and/or certificate. **Failure to provide the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. All applicants may be subject to further interviews and examinations(i.e. writing assignment) to determine qualification.**

Employment application may be accessed at www.cnmileg.gov.mp or may be picked up at the Office of the Director of the Legislative Bureau located at the Honorable Jesus P. Mafnas Memorial Building (CNMI Legislature), Capitol Hill, Saipan. Completed application and police clearance may be submitted to the Office of the Director or may be mailed, postmarked no later than the closing date to the Office of the Director; Legislative Bureau; P.O. Box 500586; Saipan, MP 96950. No telephone inquiries.

Employment Opportunity

The NMI Board of Nursing seeks a Full time Administrative Assistant:

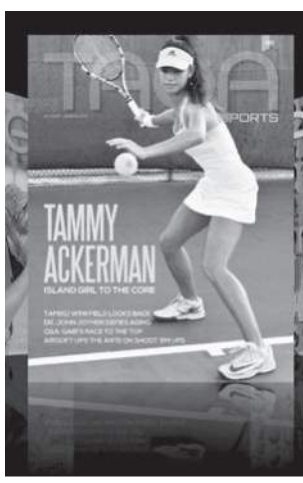
Essential competencies
1. Communications
2. Organizatonal Skills
3. Computers: Data Base management

Qualifications
High School graduate with at least two (2) years experience in data entry and customer service. Must have strong administrative skills are required, as well as advanced computer skills including knowledge of MS word, Excel and power point.

Closing Date: February 13th, 2015.

A detailed copy describing the individual position is available by request through our email below.

Interested applicants please submit your resume and a cover letter to:
CBNE Board
Email: nmibon@gmail.com



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Classified Ads

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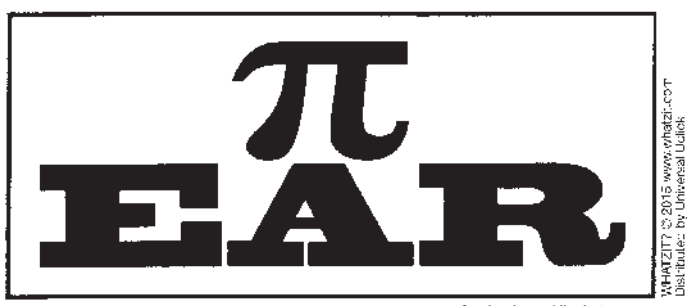
WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.



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Find today's solution in classified section

Djokovic wins 5th Aussie Open title, denies Murray a 1st

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—Novak Djokovic won his fifth Australian Open title and his eighth career Grand Slam while extending Andy Murray's misery at Melbourne Park.

Djokovic beat Murray 7-6 (5), 6-7 (4), 6-3, 6-0 in Sunday's final, relegating the Scotsman to runner-up status for the fourth time in four tries in the Australian Open final. Murray had lost twice previously to Djokovic—in 2011 and 2013—and to Roger Federer in 2010.

The No. 1-ranked Djokovic, meanwhile, is a perfect 5-for-5 in Australian Open finals.

"There were a lot of turning points in the match," Djokovic said. "Regardless of the record I have here, we both knew we had equal chances to win. It was a cat-and-mouse fight, it always is with us."

Djokovic swung momentum in a close match with a service break in the eighth game of the third set, winning four straight points. When he took a 4-0 lead in the last set, he smacked his fist hard against his chest in celebration.

At the end of the match, Djokovic threw his racket into the crowd at Rod Laver Arena.

Roy Emerson, the only other man with five or more Australian titles, was in the crowd and Djokovic acknowledged the presence of the six-time champion.

"I'm so grateful to be standing here as a champion for the fifth time, and to be in the elite group of players," Djokovic said.

Murray sat slumped over in his chair after the match, awaiting the presentations, and once again received the runner-up plate instead of the trophy.

"It's been my most consistent Grand Slam of my career. I haven't been quite able to win, but the support I've received here has been amazing," Murray said. "I'll try and come back next year and hopefully have a slightly different outcome in the final."

Murray said he had chances to win the match.

"Obviously I had opportunities in the first three sets," Murray said. "In the fourth set, I mean, he was just ripping everything. Returns he was hitting on the baseline. Once he got up a break, he just loosened up and was just going for his shots. I couldn't recover.

AP

Novak Djokovic of Serbia kisses the trophy after defeating Andy Murray of Britain in the men's singles final at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Sunday, Feb. 1, 2015.

"Novak has won five times here now, there's no disgrace, obviously, in losing to him."

Djokovic appeared to be troubled by a leg ailment in the third set, and it distracted Murray.

"I had a crisis at the end of the second, beginning of the third (set), I needed some time to regroup," Djokovic said. "I just had weakness, I couldn't call for medical because I had no reason."

Djokovic served for the first set after breaking Murray in the eighth game, but Murray broke back. After that game, Djokovic had a trainer attend to this right thumb.

He double-faulted to open the tiebreaker but then, after Murray took a 2-1 lead, won five of the next six points to regain control. He clinched the set when Murray netted a backhand service return.

In the second set, Djokovic saved a set point in the 10th game and Murray saved three break points in the 11th before it went to the tiebreaker. Sixth-seeded Murray dominated the breaker to lead 6-2, securing four set points before clinching it on Djokovic's serve.

The second set was delayed for about five minutes after the seventh game when a court invader protesting Australia's refugee policies was removed by security after stepping on to the court. Other spectators in the stadium unfurled a political banner. Organizers said two people were arrested, and the court invasion was dealt with swiftly.

There was a bigger cheer for Djokovic when the introductions were made, but plenty of Scottish flags in the stands. Some Serbian fans yelled "Adje Nole" - Serbian for "Come on Nole," which is Djokovic's nickname.

Before the match began, Andy Murray's fiancee, Kim Sears, caused a stir. She was dressed in an oversized T-shirt with a message that poked fun at the widespread attention paid to her use of colorful language during Murray's semifinal win over Tomas Berdych.

Rather than shy away from the issue, Sears' t-shirt for the final showed a sense of humor. It read: "Parental Advisory Explicit Content."

Cubs legend Ernie Banks remembered for unwavering optimism

CHICAGO (AP)—Fans and friends paid tribute to legendary Chicago Cubs slugger Ernie Banks on Saturday, recalling how he helped break baseball's color barrier during a Hall of Fame career in which he won over teammates and an entire city with the unwavering optimism he brought to the game and life.

At a memorial service in a Chicago church, the buoyant man known as "Mr. Cub" was remembered for his character as much as his accomplishments on the ballfield, including his 512 career home runs. Speaker after speaker recalled Banks' unflagging spirit and good cheer—he enthusiastically predicted each spring that his team would win the pennant—as well as his humility and care for others.

The Rev. Jesse Jackson said Banks "disarmed adversaries with optimism" and "branded goodwill." Mayor Rahm Emanuel said Banks was a "humble hero" who taught younger generations "how to play the game of life." Fellow Hall of Famer Fergie Jenkins said the unassuming, joyful Banks strove to be a good teammate, not a star.

Billy Williams, another Hall of Famer, recalled animated conversations that he and Banks would have while driving to Wrigley Field on game days.

"I never did see him read a book, but he knew about everything," Williams marveled.

Saturday would have been Banks' 84th birthday, and several speakers called on the crowd to celebrate his life, not mourn his passing. Banks, a two-time MVP, military veteran and winner of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, died Jan. 23 of a heart attack. His coffin, which was in front of the altar, was draped in a banner emblazoned with his jersey number, 14. A choir performed a rousing version of "This Little Light of Mine."

Jackson, exhorting everyone to stand, led a thunderous round of applause to celebrate Banks' birthday. In the hush that followed, the civil rights leader noted it was also the 150th anniversary of Congress passing the 13th amendment abolishing slavery.

"Smiling faces can sometimes conceal what's deep within," Jackson said, describing Banks' cheerfulness as a thermostat that "helped control the temperature" of his times. The work of Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr. was possible because of Banks, Jackson said. "We rode on Ernie's shoulders."

Banks was the Cubs' first black player when he joined the team in 1953, six years after Jackie Robinson broke baseball's color barrier.

Emanuel noted that in Banks' early years with the Cubs, he couldn't stay at some of the same hotels or eat at the same restaurants as his white teammates because of segregation. He suffered the same racial taunts and indignities as other black players of his time, but if he ever got angry, he never seemed to show it. In a 19-year career full of amazing statistics, one of the most remarkable was that he was never ejected from a game.

Roosevelt Johnson, 45, arrived at Chicago's Fourth Presbyterian Church at 5:30 a.m. and was first in line.

"I wanted to pay my respects to a true icon of the sport," said Johnson, of Zion.

Chicago native Estelle Martin, 56, said she loved to play baseball as a girl and collect baseball cards. "I was a tomboy. Ernie Banks was my favorite. He was everybody's favorite," she said.

Banks' connection to the city was evident inside the church, where the pews were filled with mourners of all ages. There were young fans who knew him only from grainy video clips and from his appearances at the ballpark after he retired, always with a smile, always chatting with fans.

But there were also older men, particularly older black men who remembered the days when Banks and others made history. While he wasn't the first African American to play in the majors, Banks was the first with the Cubs in what was one of the most segregated cities in the United States.

Banks was playing for the Kansas City Monarchs of the Negro Leagues when the Cubs purchased his contract for $10,000. He made his major league debut at shortstop and three days later hit his first home run.

With his play, particularly in the first chapters of his career when he was hitting home runs at a clip that no shortstop had ever hit them before, he simply won over a city.

After Saturday's service, many other Chicagoans got the chance to say farewell. They doffed their hats in respect as a procession carried "Mr. Cub" past his statue at Daley Plaza downtown. It then made its way up Lake Shore Drive to Wrigley Field, where Banks so often called out what became his signature phrase, "Let's play two!"

Whiteside comes up big for Heat in 83-75 win over Celtics

AP
Miami Heat's Hassan Whiteside tries to get past Boston Celtics' Jared Sullinger during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Boston, Sunday, Feb. 1, 2015.

BOSTON (AP)—Hassan Whiteside was hardly shocked when Miami coach Erik Spoelstra designed a play for him late in the third quarter of a tight game.

He was surprised when Spoelstra kept doing it, though.

Whiteside scored half of his 20 points during a dominant stretch spanning the third and fourth quarters and Miami Heat held off the Boston Celtics 83-73 on Sunday to snap a two-game slide.

"He drew up a play and I scored on it, he just kept drawing them up," said Whiteside, who went 10-for-17 from the field. "I really think he started believing I can make plays down there."

Whiteside also had nine rebounds and blocked three shots, while Chris Bosh added 18 points and Tyler Johnson had 13, helping overcome the absences of Dwyane Wade and Luol Deng.

Wade missed his second game in a row with a strained right hamstring, while Deng sat out his third straight with a strained calf. Wade, who injured himself in Tuesday's loss to Milwaukee, is averaging 21.4 points and 5.4 assists per game.

Whiteside is more than making up for their absence, though, and Spoelstra isn't his only supporter.

The 25-year-old has most of Miami in a frenzy following a wild week that included a triple-double and franchise-record 12 blocks last Sunday, and 24 rebounds on Friday.

It's quite the story for the former castoff who signed with the Heat in November after playing in both Lebanon and China last year.

"He continues to surprise me," Bosh said. "He's a talented young fellow. We want to continue to push him and encourage him to play and do well."

Avery Bradley and Tyler Zeller led the Celtics with 17 points apiece, and Brandon Bass had 15. It was Boston's third straight loss and fourth in its last five.

"We've got to do a better job of finding our pulse at the defensive end regardless of whether the ball is going in the basket or not," Boston coach Brad Stevens said. "When you miss the number of shots that we missed, I thought we let that affect how much we talked defensively. I could hear the silence and that's a bad thing."

Both teams were coming off their worst shooting performances of the season. Miami was held to a season-low 33.0 percent in a loss to Dallas, while Boston shot 35.6 percent in a setback to Houston.

Neither fared much better Sunday, with Boston shooting 37 percent and Miami 41.6, but Whiteside's 10-for-17 performance fueled the Heat's third win in their last seven games.

The suddenly surging 7-foot sensation was relatively quiet for the first two-and-a-half quarters before he began resembling the center who came in averaging 15.3 points and 17.7 rebounds over his previous three games, including a triple-double line of 14 points, 13 rebounds and a franchise-record 12 blocks last Sunday.

After Boston erased a 12-point halftime deficit, tying it at 55 with less than three minutes to play in the third, Whiteside had his way with the young Celtics.

He scored Miami's final four points of the third and opened the fourth by scoring six straight points, including a pair of long jumpers that restored the Heat's eight-point cushion.

"I hadn't seen him do that yet," Bosh said. "I don't think he's seen him do that yet. It was a nice move."

Spoelstra didn't seem to mind his big man's decision to shoot from the perimeter.

"If he's wide open and they're disrespecting him and it comes within the flow of what we do, I'm fine with that," he said.

Knicks 92, Lakers 80

In New York, Carmelo Anthony hears those voices saying he's getting old, that he can't jump like he once did.

Hard not to, since some of them are coming from right in his locker room.

Anthony answered in his own way Sunday, scoring 18 of his 31 points in the third quarter as the New York Knicks beat the Los Angeles Lakers 92-80.

He stared back toward his own bench in the second quarter after rising high to slam down a lob pass from Jason Smith, revealing that his teammates were teasing the 30-year-old forward recently after seeing him dunk.

"They said they haven't seen that before in a long time," Anthony said, "and we had this conversation before the game today, so it was just one of those moments where I had to look at the bench and let them know that I've still got it."

With Kobe Bryant out for the season and both teams among the worst in the NBA, it was anything but a Super Sunday in New York, where the national TV audience that was originally scheduled to see it missed the Lakers shooting 35.5 percent from the field.

Anthony stood out above the ugliness, turning mostly to his jumper in the third quarter to help New York pull away. He shot 13 of 25 and grabbed eight rebounds.

"Melo got hot, had it going and gave them a nice cushion," Lakers forward Carlos Boozer said. "We tried to fight back a little bit but it was a little too late."

Langston Galloway added 13 points for the Knicks, who have won five of seven and did it easily, building their first 20-point lead since they were up 21 in a victory over Philadelphia on Nov. 22.

Boozer had 19 points and 10 rebounds for the Lakers, who lost for the 10th time in 11 games. Jordan Clarkson also scored 19 points.

The Lakers had snapped their nine-game losing streak with a double-overtime victory over Chicago on Thursday but they remain lost on the road, where they fell for the seventh straight time.

"We just got off to a bad start in the first quarter," Lakers coach Byron Scott said. "I thought New York's energy was a whole lot harder than ours and their effort was a lot better than ours. They just played better."

The Knicks are 10-38, slightly worse than the Lakers' 13-35 mark. Missing half its star power with Bryant sidelined after shoulder surgery, the game was yanked from ESPN - the Knicks' fourth consecutive game that was dropped from the NBA's national TV schedule.

It was Derek Fisher's first time coaching against the team he helped win five championships, and now Phil Jackson, the coach of those teams, will have to figure out how to build the Knicks into contenders. Fisher said that doesn't require landing another star like the Lakers did when they got Shaquille O'Neal or Pau Gasol, but acknowledged they may not be able to build gradually as teams such as Oklahoma City and Portland have.

"I think you owe it to Carmelo to do it the right way, but at the same time he just signed a contract for five years," Fisher said. "He's 30 years old. We don't have 10 years to figure this out."

The Knicks led 32-19 after one and pulled away in the third, when Anthony scored 12 straight Knicks points.

Koepka rallies to win Phoenix Open for maiden PGA Tour title

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (AP)—Brooks Koepka has lost track of the miles flown, the oceans crossed and the stamps in his passport as he toiled in remote corners of the golfing world for more than two years to prepare himself for moments like Sunday at the Phoenix Open.

The most significant journey turned out to be the 50 feet his golf ball traveled from the fringe, up a ridge and right into the cup.

That eagle on the par-5 15th hole gave Koepka a share of the lead, and he left the mistakes to everyone else the rest of the way. He closed with a 5-under 66 for a one-shot victory and his first PGA Tour title.

"I left every long putt short today," Koepka said. "I said to my caddie, `I'm finally going to get this one there.'"

Hideki Matsuyama, among five players who had a share of the lead over the wild final hour at the TPC Scottsdale, was the last player in Koepka's way. The 22-year-old from Japan had an 18-foot putt to force a playoff, but it never had a chance and he closed with a 67.

Masters champion Bubba Watson (65) and Ryan Palmer (66) had to settle for pars on the three closing holes and joined Matsuyama in a tie for second. Martin Laird, tied for the lead with two holes to play, hit into the gallery on the 17th and made bogey and yanked his tee shot into the water on the 18th and made double bogey for a 72.

A week that began with hype over Tiger Woods, who shot 82 and missed the cut by 12 shots, ended with yet another example of a massive generation shift.

The 24-year-old Koepka didn't get the recognition of Jordan Spieth and Justin Thomas, or former U.S. Amateur champion Peter Uihlein, his roommate in Florida with whom he often traveled in Europe. His raw power got the attention of his peers, however, and Koepka went through enough trials to mature into a rising star.

His second victory in four starts against strong fields—he won the Turkish Airlines Open during the final stretch of the Race to Dubai in Europe in November—moved him to No. 19 in the world.

"It's unbelievable," said Koepka, who finished at 15-under 269. "I didn't think I would work my way up this quickly, but playing the Challenge and European tours led to this. And especially the failure I've had. I can't tell you how much I learned from that."

Koepka proved to be one smooth customer—he describes himself as "chill"—even when the starter pronounced his name as something like "cupcake" on the first tee. He laughed during practice swings. He wasn't rattled when Matsuyama holed a wedge from 129 yards for eagle on the opening hole, or when the Japanese star added two more birdies to catch Laird, who began Sunday with a three-shot lead.

Koepka was making nothing but pars. Back-to-back birdies late on the front nine kept him in the game, though still two shots behind.

Matsuyama took the lead with a beautiful pitch behind the green at the par-5 13th, and Koepka followed him to 4 feet for a birdie to stay two behind. Matsuyama had gone 44 holes without a bogey until a three-putt on the 14th, and then everything changed on the 15th.

Koepka rolled in his 50-foot eagle putt and tied Laird, who two-putted from 25 feet.

BRADY

From Page 28

sational fourth-quarter rally for their fourth NFL championship of the Brady-Bill Belichick era.

"You know, whatever it takes," the record-setting Brady said after throwing for four touchdowns, including a 3-yarder to Julian Edelman with 2:02 remaining as New England rallied from a 10-point deficit. "Every team has a journey and a lot of people lost faith in us ... but we held strong, we held together, and it's a great feeling."

The Patriots (15-4) had to survive a last-ditch drive by the Seahawks (14-5), who got to the 1, helped by a spectacular juggling catch by Jermaine Kearse. Then Malcolm Butler stepped in front of Ricardo Lockette to pick off Russell Wilson's pass and complete one of the wildest Super Bowl finishes.

Brady leaped for joy on the Patriots sideline after Butler's first career interception.

"It wasn't the way we drew it up," said Brady, who won his third Super Bowl MVP award. "It was a lot of mental toughness. Our team has had it all year. We never doubted each other, so that's what it took."

Brady surpassed Joe Montana's mark of 11 Super Bowl touchdown passes with a 4-yarder to Danny Amendola to bring the Patriots within three points.

Seattle, seeking to become the first repeat NFL champion since New England a decade ago, was outplayed for the first half, yet tied at 14. The Seahawks scored the only 10 points of the third period, but the NFL-leading defense couldn't slow the brilliant Brady when it counted most.

"He's Tom Brady," Edelman said. "He's the greatest quarterback on the planet."

It didn't matter how much air was in the balls, Brady was unstoppable when the pressure was strongest. While pushing aside the controversy over air pressure in the footballs stemming from the AFC title game, the Patriots moved the ball easily in the final 12 minutes.

Seattle didn't quit—it never does—and Kearse's 33-yard catch with 1:06 remaining got it to the 5. Marshawn Lynch rushed for 4 yards, then backup cornerback Butler, who was victimized on Kearse's reception, made the biggest play of his first NFL season with 20 seconds remaining.

"I just had a vision that I was going to make a big play and it came true," Butler said. "I'm just blessed. I can't explain it right now. It's crazy."

Seahawks linebacker Bruce Irvin was ejected in the final seconds for instigating a near-brawl, delaying the celebration for the Patriots.

Soon they were mobbing one another on the same field where their 2007 unbeaten season was ruined in the Super Bowl by the Giants. They also fell to the Giants for the 2011 title.

But thanks to superstar Brady and the obscure Butler, they are champions again.

"Malcolm, what a play," Brady said. "I mean, for a rookie to make a play like that in a Super Bowl and win us the game, it was unbelievable."

Brady has equaled Montana with four Lombardi Trophies and three Super Bowl MVPs. He stands alone with 13 Super Bowl touchdown passes. He was 37 for 50 for 328 yards against the NFL's top-ranked defense.

He also was picked off twice; Brady was intercepted a total of two times in his previous five Super Bowls.

Yet, he picked apart the Seahawks on fourth-quarter drives of 68 and 64 yards, solidifying his championship legacy.

His heroics offset those of Chris Matthews, one of Seattle's least-used players before the postseason. Matthews recovered the onside kick that helped the Seahawks beat Green Bay in overtime for the NFC crown, and had a breakout performance Sunday.

Having never caught a pass in the NFL, Matthews grabbed four for 109 yards and a touchdown. Lynch ran for 102 yards, but didn't get the ball at the 1 on the decisive play—a decision the Seahawks will rue forever.

"For it to come down to a play like that, I hate that we have to live with that," coach Pete Carroll said, "because we did everything right to win the football game."

The teams got down to football under the open retractable roof at University of Phoenix Stadium—the first venue to host an indoor and an outdoor Super Bowl—after dealing with distractions far beyond the typical Super Bowl hype. The Patriots are still being investigated for using for those under-inflated footballs the AFC championship game.

It was a game of spurts by both teams before a crowd of 70,288 that was clearly pro-Seattle.

Jeremy Lane made the first big play to negate a nearly eight-minute drive by the Patriots with a leaping interception at the goal line late in the first quarter. Lane made his first pro interception, but left with a wrist injury after being tackled by Julian Edelman.

His replacement, Tharold Simon, got torched by Brady the rest of the way.

Wilson didn't get off a pass in the first quarter. When Brady completed his record 50th postseason TD throw, 11 yards to Brandon LaFell against Simon, it was 7-0.

Seattle went to its bench to help tie it.

Matthews' first career catch, a reaching 44-yarder over Kyle Arrington and by far the longest first-half play for Seattle, led to Lynch's bruising 3-yard TD run to make it 7-7.

But Brady to Rob Gronkowski made it 14-7 and seemed to finish off a dominant first half for the Patriots. Except no one told the resilient Seahawks.

A dormant offense turned dangerous in a span of 29 seconds, covering 80 yards in five plays, including a late gamble. Lockette caught a 23-yard pass and Arrington was flagged for a facemask, putting Seattle at the 10 with :06 remaining. Carroll went for it and the new Seahawks star, Matthews, grabbed Wilson's pass in the left corner of the end zone.

It was the most lopsided halftime tie imaginable.

Then Seattle stormed to a 24-14 lead in the third quarter on Steven Hauschka's 27-yard field goal and Doug Baldwin's 3-yard TD reception. New England was stumbling—until Brady once again stepped up.

"I've been at it for 15 years and we've had a couple of tough losses in this game," Brady said. "This one came down to the end, and this time, we made the plays."

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Toronto	33	15	.688	—
Brooklyn	18	28	.391	14
Boston	16	30	.348	16
New York	10	38	.208	23
Philadelphia	10	38	.208	23

Southeast Division

Atlanta	40	8	.833	—
Washington	31	17	.646	9
Miami	21	26	.447	18½
Charlotte	20	27	.426	19½
Orlando	15	35	.300	26

Central Division

Chicago	30	19	.612	—
Cleveland	29	20	.592	1
Milwaukee	25	22	.532	4
Detroit	18	30	.375	11½
Indiana	17	32	.347	13

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Memphis	35	12	.745	—
Houston	33	15	.688	2½
Dallas	32	17	.653	4
San Antonio	30	18	.625	5½
New Orleans	25	22	.532	10

Northwest Division

Portland	32	16	.667	—
Oklahoma City	23	24	.489	8½
Denver	19	29	.396	13
Utah	17	30	.362	14½
Minnesota	8	39	.170	23½

Pacific Division

Golden State	37	8	.822	—
L.A. Clippers	33	15	.688	5½
Phoenix	28	21	.571	11
Sacramento	17	29	.370	20½
L.A. Lakers	13	35	.271	25½

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MVP

From Page 28

MVP awards—as the Pro Football Hall of Famer.

And no QB in history has more.

Brady completed 37 of 50 passes for 328 yards with four touchdown passes, each to a different receiver, including an 8-for-8, 65-yard bit of perfection on the drive that led to the go-ahead score with about 2 minutes left Sunday night. That performance, and a victory-clinching interception by rookie cornerback Malcolm Butler, lifted the New England Patriots to a 28-24 comeback victory over the defending champion Seattle Seahawks in a Super Bowl with a slow start and a "Whoa!" finish.

This was not Brady at his best throughout. He threw two interceptions, including one deep in Seattle territory in the first quarter, and another in the third that led to points for the Seahawks.

That's part of why the Patriots trailed 24-14 in the fourth quarter, before Brady got the comeback going.

"It wasn't the way we drew it up. Certainly, throwing a couple of picks didn't help," said Brady, who broke Peyton Manning's Super Bowl record of 34 completions set last year. "It was a lot of mental toughness. Our team has had it all year. We never doubted each other, so that's what it took. That was a great football team we beat. I'm just so happy for our team."

And to think, back in late September, folks were writing off Brady, saying his best days were long behind him, especially right after a 41-14 loss at Kansas City that dropped the Patriots to 2-2.

"Every team has a journey," Brady said Sunday, "and a lot of people lost faith in us early. But we held strong. We held together."

Decades ago, sitting in his family's season-ticket seats at San Francisco's Candlestick Park while growing up, Brady would wear a No. 16 jersey, just like Montana, and cheer for his favorite player's team.

Brady did a fairly good impression of Joe Cool against Seattle.

He connected with Danny Amendola for a 4-yard touchdown with about 8 minutes left. That gave Brady 12 TD passes in Super Bowls, breaking Montana's mark. Then, with 2:02 to go, Brady hit Julian Edelman from 3 yards for TD toss No. 13 in Super Bowls—and, more importantly, the lead.

"Tom's the best ever," Edelman said.

Brady turned to New England's sideline, pointed, then raised his right fist, his white jersey stained green from the turf.

Only after Butler grabbed Russell Wilson's pass from the 1-yard line in the final half-minute could Brady really begin to celebrate, leaping up and down on the sideline and embracing coach Bill Belichick.

Now Brady, Montana and Terry Bradshaw of the Pittsburgh Steelers are the only starting quarterbacks to earn four Super Bowl rings.

At the outset of Brady's career after being a sixth-round draft pick, he and Belichick combined to win three championships in a four-year span, in the 2002, 2004 and 2005 Super Bowls. Brady was the MVP in the first two of those.

But Sunday's victory ended a decade title drought, after losses in the big games in 2008 and 2012, both times against the New York Giants.

"Well, it's been a long journey. I've been at it for 15 years and we've had a couple of tough losses in this game," Brady said. "This one came down to the end, and this time, we made the plays."

CARROLL'S

From Page 28

game-saving interception with 20 seconds left Sunday to lock down New England's 28-24 victory in the Super Bowl.

Let the second-guessing begin on what surely will be one of the most debated play calls in NFL history.

"Nobody to blame but me," Carroll said.

Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson shouldered his share, too. Both coach and quarterback also gave lots of credit to Butler, the rookie free agent out of West Alabama who made the roster, then saved the Super Bowl.

"The guy made a great play," Wilson said.

But this one was hard to explain away.

Seattle had two timeouts left with the clock ticking down when Wilson fired into a cluster of blue and white shirts. Butler dug inside of Seahawks receiver Ricardo Lockette and made his first career interception.

"I had a feeling I was going to make a big play today," Butler said. "But not that big."

Give credit where it's due.

But about that play call again:

"Dumbest play call in the HISTORY of NFL football," tweeted former 49ers receiver Dwight Clark, who made a pretty good grab himself: The Catch.

And this from NFL career rushing leader Emmitt Smith: "Worst play call I've seen in the history of football."

It left them speechless in Seattle, too. Well, practically.

"We've got Marshawn Lynch, one of the best running backs in the league, and everybody makes their decisions and unfortunately, we didn't give him the ball," Seahawks linebacker Bobby Wagner said.

Carroll's explanation: He saw the Patriots bring in a formation with eight big guys and three cornerbacks and didn't think Lynch, who tied for the league lead with 13 touchdowns rushing this season, would be able to bull it in against that defense.

"It's not a great matchup for us to run the football, so we were going to throw the ball, really to waste a play," Carroll said. "If we score, we do, if we don't, we'll run it in on third or fourth down."

Butler saw the stacked receivers on the right side of the field and said Wilson's eyes tipped him off. He ducked inside of Lockette and made the play.

Quite a moment for a player who wasn't drafted, wasn't even signed to a contract right after the draft. He was an "invited tryout" player—offered a chance to show what he could do in May. A long shot to make the roster, though Patriots cornerback Brandon Browner said he's been proving he belongs all year. Browner, a former Seahawk, said Butler leads the team in interceptions during practice.

Patriots rookie backup quarterback Jimmy Garoppolo, who spent lots of time working against Butler in rookie camps during the summer, called him "a character."

"And he's fast," Garoppolo said. "I don't know what his 40 speed is, but his play speed is incredible. He broke on that ball pretty well."

Only moments earlier, things were playing out much differently for Butler. He was in coverage—good coverage—against Seahawks receiver Jermaine Kearse and appeared to bat the ball down for an incompletion. But as Kearse was falling, the ball bobbled between his legs, and he kept it in the air by batting it twice while tumbling. Kearse made the catch on his back for a 33-yard gain that gave Seattle a first-and-goal at the 5.

Butler went to the sideline.

"My teammates were saying, nine out of 10 times, that ball is incomplete," he said. "It was devastating."

A play later, Lynch had bulled the ball to the 1.

Seattle had two timeouts and three plays to try to win the game.

Carroll's call ended it all.

But there was blame to go around, and Wilson wasn't letting his coach take the fall all alone.

"I thought it was going to be a touchdown," Wilson said. "But I put the blame on me. I'm the one who threw it."

Viewing parties give Super Bowl local flavor

TEXT AND PHOTOS By JON PEREZ

Local football fans, most of which were rooting for the defending champion Seattle Seahawks, packed Super Bowl XLIX viewing parties held in several hotels and restaurants on Saipan early Monday morning.

It is safe to say that Saipan is Seahawks country since most locals here have either studied or lived in the Pacific Northwest.

There were also New England Patriots supporters, the underdogs this year and the "Evil Empire" to some after the whole "deflategate" brouhaha that has hovered around the past two weeks leading to the big game.

But, in every sporting event, only one team will end up celebrating, leaving the other ruing and wondering what went wrong.

Seahawks fans watched in agony the moment Malcolm Butler stepped in front of wide receiver Ricardo Lockette to intercept quarterback Russell Wilson's pass on the end zone, while at the other end Patriots fans celebrated that game-changing defensive play.

Naked Fish was packed with nearly 100 football fans, one of them is New England supporter Francis Mendiola.

Mendiola will be one of the Patriots fans that will have a good night's sleep after coach Bill Belichick and Tom Brady guided New England to a fourth Lombardy trophy.

"It will be one memorable Super Bowl. I thought the Patriots were going to lose after trailing by 10 points. But in every game, it ain't over until the fat lady sings," he added.

Commonwealth Football League Association president John Blanco was joined by his friends among them were Reps. Edward Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) and Ed Propst (Ind-Saipan) and former senator Ray Yumul.

Marpac resident manager Guy Pudney said it has been their tradition hosting viewing parties in at least three venues on Saipan.

"On a national level, Bud Light is the official Super Bowl sponsor. Locally we run promotions by hosting viewing parties, and giving away gifts, cash, and other prizes," said Pudney, who decided to remain neutral being a longtime Cowboys fan.

"This Super Bowl is one very competitive game. It really gave the fans something to talk about in the coming years," added Pudney.

Naked Fish co-owner Joe Guerrero, a Seahawks fan after he and wife Eleanor studied in Seattle, said it was a great turnout for them since the 10-year-old bar has become a favorite hang out for sports fans on the island.

"The Super Bowl viewing party has been an annual event since we opened in 2004. This was the second year that we held it since we took over managing the bar. A lot of people purchased their tickets in advance but more bought it at the door."

He said that they have also lined up other events this year like concerts, comedy shows, and wine tasting.

"We also partner with other organizations like fundraising events since we love to give back to the community. The community has been supportive of us for the past 10 years and we love to give back to the people."

Next-door neighbor Saipan World Resort also hosted a viewing party at the Red Box Sports Bar sponsored by Pacific Trading Co. and Heineken. Hotel sales and marketing manager Mike Babauta said they "had a very good crowd despite of the competition from the other establishments.

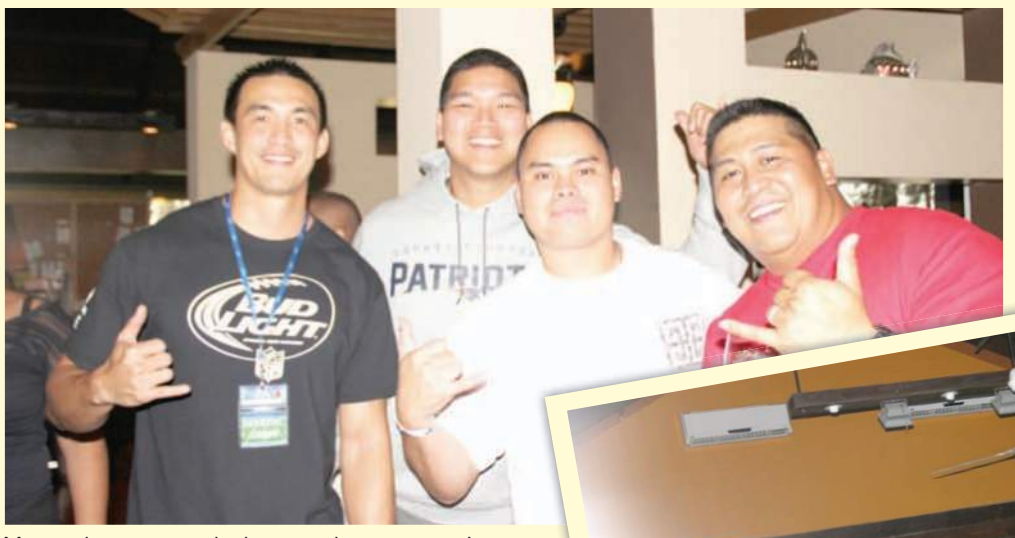
"Overall it was a good attendance for us. We exceeded the number of fans and most are returning guests that have enjoyed last year's event," said Babauta.

"World Resort has been doing this even before I got on board. We just revamped it four years ago. The new thing that we offered is breakfast and lunch plus giving away premium gear," he added.

Babauta, a Packers fan, said that it was one of the best Super Bowl finals in a while.

"I'm neutral this year since the Seahawks beat the Packers and I am hoping to watch them in the Super Bowl next year. But this is one of the best Super Bowl matches in a while. That final play will be debated on by football fans for years."

Club C, Godfather's Bar, Coral Ocean Point, Pacific Islands Club, and VFW Post 3457 were some of the other bars that hosted Super Bowl viewing parties.



Marpac beverage and tobacco sales manager James Lee, left, poses with football fans.

Patriots and Seahawks fans enjoy a friendly banter.

A Seattle Seahawks fans reacts after his team scored on a field goal at Naked Fish Bar and Grill.

Seattle fans celebrate after the Seahawks went ahead, 24-14.

Patriot fans rejoice after Tom Brady brought New England back into the game.

The crowd at Red Box Sport Bar reacts after Malcolm Butler made the game-winning interception for the Patriots.

GCA holds successful inaugural Fun Run fundraiser

By THOMAS MANGLONA II
CORRESPONDENT

Navy Hill's Grace Christian Assembly hosted its inaugural Fun Run, Walk, and Bike fundraiser in an effort to raise money for the church's plan to build a GCA church in Tanapag.

According to Fun Run coordinator Becky Robles, 125 people took part in last week's two-hour event, which raised over $800 .

A raffle drawing also took place. Rueben Bachica won the $50 Tony Roma's grand prize certificate.

"I would like to extend a big thank you to all the volunteers, participants and sponsors. They helped with logistics, registration, water, tents, transporting supplies, and providing raffle prizes," she told *Saipan Tribune*.

"We hope to host another one later this year for the school to raise funds to improve the volleyball court," she added.

To support Grace Christian Assembly's efforts in building a Tanapag Church, email Becky Robles at beckyrobles0409@gmail.com.

New England Patriots strong safety Malcolm Butler (21) intercepts a pass intended for Seattle Seahawks wide receiver Ricardo Lockette (83) during the second half of NFL Super Bowl XLIX football game Sunday, Feb. 1, 2015, in Glendale, Ariz.
AP

Brady rallies Patriots to Super Bowl win over Seahawks

Seattle Seahawks head coach Pete Carroll watches from the sidelines during the second half of NFL Super Bowl XLIX football game against the New England Patriots Sunday, Feb. 1, 2015, in Glendale, Ariz.
AP

By BARRY WILNER
AP PRO FOOTBALL WRITER

Ten years removed from his last Super Bowl win, Tom Brady wasn't letting this one slip away.

Sure, the brilliant Brady needed a huge play by an undrafted rookie to preserve New England's 28-24 Super Bowl victory over Seattle on Sunday night. But Brady's imprint was all over the Patriots' sen-

See BRADY on Page 26

Tom Brady wins 3rd Super Bowl MVP award

By HOWARD FENDRICH
AP PRO FOOTBALL WRITER

GLENDALE, Ariz. (AP)—As a kid, years before he became a pretty good quarterback in his own right, Tom Brady idolized Joe Montana.

Now, at age 37, Brady owns just as many Super Bowl championships—and just as many Super Bowl

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New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady celebrates with the Vince Lombardi Trophy after the NFL Super Bowl XLIX football game against the Seattle Seahawks Sunday, Feb. 1, 2015, in Glendale, Ariz.
AP

Carroll's call, Butler's pick help Patriots hold onto SB win

By EDDIE PELLS
AP NATIONAL WRITER

GLENDALE, Ariz. (AP)—Pete Carroll made the call.

Malcolm Butler made the play.

The Seahawks coach chose a pass on second-and-goal from the 1 instead of giving it to Marshawn Lynch, and Butler made him pay—stepping in for the

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Djokovic wins 5th Aussie Open title, denies Murray a 1st
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Viewing parties give Super Bowl local flavor
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